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METROPOLITAN
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SELECTIONS FROM THE PASTON LETTERS

SELECTIONS FROM THE PASTON LETTERS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY

SIR JOHN FENN

ARRANGED AND EDITED BY

ALICE DRAYTON GREENWOOD

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AUTHOR OF "THE HANOVERIAN QUEENS OF ENGLAND," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

THIS volume has been compiled in the belief that many readers might enjoy an acquaintance with the Pastons, who have not time to grapple with their entire correspondence.

The *Letters* are, therefore, given in the "modernized" version of Sir John Fenn, their first editor, to whose extraordinary accuracy of transcript and rendering Dr. Gairdner himself bore emphatic testimony. The modernizing consists chiefly in substituting modern spelling for that of the fifteenth century, and only in a few cases of translating the terms. The present editor has occasionally corrected a word or two, but has seldom found alteration necessary, except in the case of dates, which Fenn was, naturally, not always in a position to assign correctly.

The definitive edition of the *Paston Letters* is, of course, Dr. Gairdner's, last issued in six volumes (1904), a work which must always be one of the indispensable sources for English history at the close of the Middle Ages; and the student who wants to study the *Letters* fully must refer to that work.

The present Selection aims at exhibiting the home life and ordinary occupations of a middle-class family of good standing in what was, in the fifteenth century, a principal manufacturing and business county of England, and at showing, from their own letters, how the public and political disturbances of the age affected them.

The *Letters* have been grouped under the several

topics with which they principally deal in preference to a strictly chronological, but disconnected order.

Many, though not all, of the notes are adopted from Fenn, and in that case, marked by (F.). Allusions to Dr. Gairdner's edition are marked (G.), and numbered according to his six-volume edition; and the references as numbered in the table of contents will enable the student to refer for further information to either editor.

Although Sir John Fenn lived in the eighteenth century that is not to say that his annotations are negligible. In certain directions (as of the law, agriculture, land customs, heraldry, or local geography), his knowledge and understanding were more direct than could be the case with modern scholars in whose era the old-fashioned systems have long been obsolete.

A. D. G.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Correspondence

The *Paston Letters* form a kind of magic mirror in which we may behold the complex life of the fifteenth century. For three generations the Pastons, of Paston, near Mundesley, Norfolk, preserved their business correspondence, which, being written by themselves and a few friends, reveals much as to their family life, education, housekeeping, farming, and money matters, their friends and enemies. Their property was valuable, but most of it recently acquired, and therefore their lives were, for two generations at least, normally conducted in an atmosphere of lawsuits. The law of that age was an adventurous pursuit, intimately affected by violence. Judges and sheriffs might be influenced by bribery or by force, and as the century rolled on the latter (as prompter and cheaper), became the favourite method. Jurymen went in terror of their lives; prisoners might be snatched out of one gaol into another; and, possession being distinctly nine points of the law, it was an advantage, in a suit about an estate, for the claimant first to force the occupant out. Hence the system whereby armed, unscrupulous persons combined to terrorize the rest and so to prejudice the officers of the law in their own favour. The War of the Roses is unduly emphasized in most of our histories, it resulted from the coalescing of various quarrels into two sides; much worse than a few little pitched battles was the prevalence of disorder complacently tolerated by the Government.

Disorder, however, interfered less than we might suppose with normal progress. The *Letters* exhibit a gradual change in standards such as, perhaps, every century reveals to those who study its records.

The year which saw the accession of Edward IV. and Louis XI. seems to mark almost a turning-point in social customs. Pleasure, fashion, and humour characterize London life—fashion coming from the Court of Charles the Bold in Flanders—and the reading of books becomes a widespread habit in a few years.

The object of the first of these Pastons, the Judge who died in 1444, was to found a family in his native place; his son John aims at becoming a magnate of county importance; the elder grandson hopes to be a successful courtier.

The letters of the eldest generation are brief, grave and polite; with the second they become copious and detailed, and quite plain spoken. Those of the third are marked by a lighter touch, jest and slang occur, and news is eagerly asked for in letters written as much for pleasure as for business.

The Judge, again, lived at home when he was not on circuit; his son earns the remonstrances of his wife and friends by his lengthy sojourns in London, where business begins to concentrate; the grandson seldom visited his home except to recover from illness.

For politics the writers care little, excepting as threatening their business, or affording an opportunity of driving a bargain. The battles of the time were seldom dangerous except to the nobility, but the organization of parties involved the lesser gentry. The Judge, it is clear, was an independent man, but even in his time a combination of false claimants, revengeful litigants and jealous neighbours threatened his standing. The son, John Paston, tried to enrol himself as the Duke of Norfolk's retainer without doing anything for the Duke; then, finding this of little use, placed his elder son at the Court of Edward IV., and his second son at the Duke's. The elder remained closely attached to Court life, but the younger severed his connection

with a patron who never showed him favour, and attached himself to the Duke's rival, the Earl of Oxford, who was at that time a magnate in the eastern counties only second to the Duke, and a much pleasanter and more generous patron, as well as a bolder politician and soldier. It was to this connection, steadily adhered to by the young man through years of discouragement, that the eventual success of the Pastons was due, for the House of Oxford was Lancastrian and came into its own, at long last, on the accession of Henry VII.

Finally, we may trace in the letters the growth of the Renaissance, or Tudor sentiment of individuality. The family is more of a unit in the earlier portion than in the later. Young Sir John ran away from his father's home, and though he had to return it was not for very long. The sons of Margaret can jest to each other on her unreasonable restrictions. Above all, in the matter of matrimony, though they are principally concerned with the property involved, there are hints of a personal feeling, especially on the part of the ladies, who can scarcely be characterized as bashful.

2. The Paston Family

The Pastons had long been settled in the village from which they took their name. Scores of eminent Norfolk families testify by surnames derived from their early homes (Heydon, Morley, Tuddenham, Calthorpe, Tilney, Walpole, Gresham, etc.) to a long descent from, presumably, English or Danish ancestry, which, whether or not obscured by a lapse into villenage after the Norman Conquest, was certainly regarded as of free status in the fourteenth, or even the thirteenth century. At the beginning of the fifteenth they all call themselves squires, and every farm is a manor. But they have become squires by removing from their nameplace to some manor which they have purchased. Paston of Paston was not more, but less aristocratic than Heydon of Baconsthorpe. Ancient families rooted

in the same spot belong to fiction, not history. Like the Howards and many another prosperous family of the age, the Pastons began to mount the ladder of ambition with a Judge, for the efforts of the Government, from Edward I. to Henry VII., to provide organization for the requirements of a rapidly developing society made great demands on lawyers and justices. William Paston, the Judge, married an heiress, amassed money, invested it in the sole investment of the age, the land, married his eldest son to a much richer heiress, and established him as Paston of Gresham. He died in 1444.

John Paston *the eldest*, son of William and Agnes Paston, and married to Margaret Mautby, was educated at the Temple Inn and Peterhouse, Cambridge, and he endeavoured to magnify his position by becoming manager and eventual heir to a very wealthy and childless kinsman, Sir John Fastolfe. But the intricacies of Fastolfe's will offered a tempting handle to covetous rivals, and John Paston's life was spent in, and untimely ended by, an obstinate struggle with an unscrupulous clique, headed by two successive Dukes of Suffolk and a Duke of Norfolk. It is here that we can study the practical results of that late-mediæval combination of force with fraud known in history as "livery and maintenance."

John Paston died in 1466, and his two sons, both named John, came into their inheritance early. In youthful optimism they set out to encounter the dukes with great courage but slender resources. Their letters to each other are perhaps the most interesting of the whole, for an entire affection and confidence existed between them.

The elder brother, Sir John, knighted at the age of twenty-one by the equally youthful Monarch Edward IV., is a typical young courtier of the English "Renaissance" time. Neither specially able nor specially incompetent, he was evidently a delightful companion and a general favourite—good humoured, lively and sanguine and in the forefront of fashion. He has a Great-horse and

possesses the chivalrous accomplishments so admirably as to joust beside the King and Anthony Woodville. He dresses, of course, in the latest style, as to doublets, hats and laces, and employs his special silk-woman. He patronizes a book-copyist and buys and reads poems and romances. As soon as possible he has one "in preent." He keeps several menservants about him, some of whom can act their parts in plays or pageants; and he makes the fashionable trips to Calais and to Flanders, where he forms one of the dazzling train of Princess Margaret at her wedding with the great Duke of Burgundy.

Sir John was usually on the move and in the train of Edward IV. He was for ever expecting this royal comradeship to provide a practical result, the assurance of the Fastolfe inheritance, and he sought the favour of every rising star in turn—the Queen, to one of whose kinswomen he betrothed himself, the brilliant Lord Scales (Anthony Woodville), Lord Hastings, and then, promptly deserting the King in 1470, of Clarence and Warwick. So little importance was attached to the vacillations of such men that the Paston brothers were at once pardoned on the return of Edward, and Lord Hastings continued to be the kind patron. The pestilence of 1479 carried off Sir John just in time to save the family from being ruined by his thriftlessness. His abler brother, John *the youngest* succeeded him as head of the family, played his cards well, secured a considerable part of the Fastolfe inheritance by judiciously sacrificing the remainder, kept aloof from politics till after Bosworth, filled the post of Sheriff, made a merit of necessity and proved his loyalty to Henry VII., was knighted by him on the field of Stoke, and, reaping a full harvest in the Earl of Oxford's triumph, left his family established among the principal gentry of the county, second, indeed, to Howards and Boleyns, but untouched by their tragedies.

His successor, Sir William Paston, became a second eminent lawyer. He also kept up with the advancing age, and named his eldest son Erasmus, after the

famous scholar whom he had certainly heard at Cambridge. Sir William's great barn is still a noble sight at Paston. His second son, Sir Clement, a sturdy fighter on sea and land, made his mark as a naval officer. "Our seaman," says Henry VIII.; "Our captain," says Queen Mary; "Our father," quoth Good Queen Bess.

Still flourishing, the Pastons fought and lost as Cavaliers throughout the Civil War, and were comforted by Charles II. with the Earldom of Yarmouth, their local metropolis for two centuries. But then arrived the inevitable spendthrift. The second earl married a natural daughter of Charles II., too late to reap the golden harvest which accrued to others as complaisant, and ruined himself and his family, which lost the estates and sank into obscurity.

The Earl remained a Jacobite, wherefore, probably, the selection of his title (which lapsed on his death in 1732), for George II.'s old German *compagnonne*, the Countess of Yarmouth of later times.

3. Margaret Mautby

The foundation of the first John Paston's fortune was his marriage to the heiress Margaret Mautby. On the reason for this rich alliance it is interesting to speculate. It probably sprang out of the French war.

Margaret's father, John Mautby, represented a family possessed for a century or more of valuable properties in the neighbourhood of Yarmouth. He was taken prisoner in France and exchanged, by means of Sir John Fastolfe, who "bought" a French prisoner on purpose. There was a relationship—not now precisely to be traced—between Judge Paston, or perhaps his wife Agnes, and Sir John Fastolfe, and it looks as if the Judge, who was closely connected as friend and "counsel" with many of Fastolfe's kin and connections, had arranged the matter. Fastolfe was an unconscionable usurer, and he set it down that he had never been

paid, to the day of his death, for this ransoming of Squire Mautby, but he never asked the Pastons for the money, but, on the contrary, appeared to be so far bound to, or considerate of them that it was feasible for them—Agnes, Margaret and John—to reckon a little upon his favour. It may well be that he was under obligations to the Judge.

At all events Squire John Mautby was repaying something when, with the consent and guarantee of her two grandfathers, he made his daughter an heiress, and married her to young John Paston. Her mother's family, the Berneys of Reedham, who brought her up, remained firm and active partisans of Paston, and when the widowed mother remarried, Sir Thomas Garneys, of Gelston (or Gelderstone), proved an affectionate stepfather to Margaret, and seems to have settled his own manor of Gelston upon her second son, John *the youngest.*

Margaret Paston is perhaps the most attractive character in the *Letters.* A capable and devoted wife, an admirable woman of business, a good friend and considerate mistress, held in high esteem by friends and neighbours, she proved herself a woman of intrepid courage and steady determination. She was herself devout and sympathetic to the religious sentiment of others. One of the very few occasions on which she seems to hint an admonishment to her selfish, worldly-minded husband is over the testament of a relative, John Berney, whose bequests remained unpaid. At least, she says, something should be expended upon masses for his soul, "that the dead may have part of his own good."

Her own will provided for the rebuilding of the ruined aisle of Mautby Church, in which her tomb was to stand, and gave directions for heraldic bearings and certain texts to be depicted upon it. Her second son carried out her charge faithfully, but he was not a good builder in stonework, his fine town house in Norwich is said to have been ill designed and executed, and the south aisle of Mautby again fell into ruin and has

to-day vanished. Somewhere beneath that green-covered mound must lie the remains of the strenuous and loyal Margaret Paston.

4. Women

The position of a woman in the fifteenth century depended entirely upon marriage. Until she married she was her mother's helpless property—unless, indeed, her father had utilized her as a pawn in a child-marriage, which was seldom the case outside the nobility. Elizabeth Paston, for instance, had to endure beatings from her mother so severe as to lead a kinswoman to remonstrate. But as soon as a woman married she became her husband's confidential partner. Elizabeth was married to a man whom she hardly knew, but she at once writes to her family on his behalf with dignity and confidence.

Widowhood might make the wife's position either better or worse. Any woman whose hand conveyed property was sure to be sought in marriage, and if she were in the unhappy position of being a ward, or connected with powerful kin, she would be unable to avoid, and probably unable to choose, a second, third or fourth husband; the fortunes of Queen Catherine, Henry V.'s widow, her sister-in-law the Duchess of Bedford, or the Lady Margaret Beaufort, offer well-known instances. But in the more comfortable middle-class a widow might be well able to preserve her independence, as did Agnes and Margaret Paston and Elizabeth Clere.

Agnes Paston controlled the education of her younger sons and continued for some time to live with her eldest son and his wife, though she had her own house in Norwich and another at Oxnead. Margaret remained till her death the arbitress of her younger sons' lives, though they were grown to manhood and one was married; but she did not coerce her daughter Margery so harshly as Agnes had Elizabeth, nor does he desire the tutor of her young son to beat him.

5. Servants and Assistants

The fifteenth century was, at all events, a golden age in one respect; "the faithful service of the antique world" was a reality. Richard Calle, the principal steward, Thomas Playter, John Pampyng, John Russe, James Gresham and others remained for long years trusted servants without a suggestion that change was possible.

Their status is difficult to characterize. It would seem that no precise limits hedged one grade from another. John Daubeny, for a lifetime assistant and soldier to John Paston and his sons, is termed "Gentleman" and possessed his own house in Norwich. Pampyng is also "gentleman," though he did steward's work and was distrusted by Sir John in a petulant mood. "A busy man called," hints a complainant, *i.e.* mischief-making (*busybody* gives the true meaning). Calle was a yeoman with property in Edingthorpe, and regarded by the Pastons as quite below their own rank. There is nothing to show what the remuneration of these men was, but it is clear that they did not devote the whole of their time to their master's service, and also that he was expected either to reward them in the end very substantially, or else to help them to some better post.

6. Clergy

In this connection the position of the numerous clergy so often mentioned in the *Letters* is noticeable. The chaplains, whether of great personages such as the Earl of Warwick and the Queen, or of the Pastons, are assumed to have influence with their patrons, and it was thought worth while to secure their favour. Thomas Howes, Fastolfe's chaplain, was for years treated as on equal terms by John Paston. James Gloys, Margaret's chaplain, obtained influence so great, in her old age, as to discomfort her children exceedingly.

On the other hand, the parish priest presented by the squire usually appears as his humble factotum. The position was often that of a menial secretary; he was sent about on messages and legal business and constantly employed in writing; he asks his patron's orders about any little crisis which occurs.

The position of such parish priests had certainly declined. Probably one cause was the increased expense of living; stipends of vicarages, at all events, being practically fixed figures, settled in the thirteenth century, and not capable of much if any increase.

A parson who had attained to a Mastership of Arts is always entitled "Master," the title "Sir" being the conventional and less honourable prefix, perhaps, of a B.A., though "Bachelor" appears also as a title. Several of the Masters in this correspondence are, however, lawyers. The professional duties of a parish priest were almost wholly comprised in his performance of the numerous services of his church. Preaching seems to have been very rare; when a sermon is mentioned it is given by a travelling friar, such as Doctor Brackley or John Mouth. But the friars were also pressed into secretarial and legal service by the wealthy. A friar was no tramp, wandering where he would; his circuit was prescribed by his superiors, so that he became well known in the district assigned to him, and no doubt was accustomed to a regular hospitality. Hence his willingness to make himself useful to his hosts. Friar Brackley was a man most highly respected, and deservedly, so far as we can judge. Thomas Howes obtained a great many livings (the abolition of pluralities never was more than a dead letter), among them Mautby and Paston; but his honesty cannot be considered as certain as his ability.

The secularity of the Church is by this time marked. Its main functions, among men, are legal and financial. The bishops are largely occupied in public business; their courts are choked with litigation over wills and settlements. A letter of Sir John's shows that chalices and vestments are pledged or sold as personal property.

His brother attends to a papal bull only to please his mother. Already her devoutness seems a little old-fashioned. Chaplains are still indispensable in good families, but only women go habitually to mass.

7. Shipmen

One class to whom the *Letters* allude as to a peculiar people is that of the Shipmen; Lynn, Yarmouth, Norwich, and the smaller ports such as Blakeney, Cromer, Mundesley, Happesburgh or Winterton, were full of "Shipmen"—as Chaucer also terms them—who were certainly not all deep-sea fishermen or adventurers to the Baltic or "the cold coasts," *i.e.* Iceland or the Faroe Isles.

There was a large coasting trade, and at times when war or piracy rendered the narrow seas traffic especially unsafe, or an interval of truce reduced the regular transit business to Calais, there might be crowds of unemployed men about the quays. Such men could easily be hired, whether to foment a riot or to carry out a forcible seizure of property, like the Duke of Suffolk's raids on Drayton and Hellesdon, or to perform parts in law courts as witnesses to some false statement. They supplied a distinct element in the disorders of Norfolk, if less remarkable than the mariners of Hants and Sussex. Probably the shipmen formed a more homogeneous class than any other among the mediæval working class, and they exerted a marked political influence. In 1450 the sailors of Chichester, Portsmouth and Southampton practically "brought down the ministry" of the corrupt Duke of Suffolk and the bankrupt Council by their violent assault on the ministers (two bishops) who tried to economize by cheating them of some of their pay, while shipmen of the Thames ports carried out the lawless execution of Suffolk himself at sea. Ten years later the sailors of the Cinque Ports enabled Warwick twice over to capture the Lancastrian commander of Sandwich, and by making

that great port the Yorkist base to turn the tables on the Lancastrians. Their action was more decisive than any battle.

8. Money

Coin was scarce, being hoarded, exported to France for wages, etc., and insufficiently minted, since there was difficulty in obtaining bullion. Hence plate, jewels, and cloth of gold were valuable whether as a means of exchange or as security for credit. In the middle of the century people even had recourse to barter; barley was accepted for rent (1 comb per acre). John *the youngest* offered oats for a hat; Sir John Fastolfe, in the 'fifties, paid wool or corn for goods and got badly cheated in Yarmouth.

The unit of value was still, as in Saxon times, the silver penny, of which 360 should weigh one pound. But there were coins of greater nominal value, the groat and the noble, while reckonings were usually calculated in two denominations not represented by any coin, the shilling and the mark.

12 silver pence = 1 shilling.
6*s.* 8*d.* = 1 noble.
13*s.* 4*d.* = 1 mark.

Edward IV., whose taxes and benevolences disorganized prices so terribly that trade in Norfolk almost stopped, made a spasmodic effort to improve things by coining both the silver noble, or angel, of 6*s.* 8*d.*, and the gold noble of 18*s.* 4*d.* (the rose noble, or Royal, whence the Shakesperian jokes); 8 rose nobles should be worth 5 marks (£3 6*s.* 8*d.*), and 45 rose nobles 1 pound weight of gold. But his coins were difficult to pass, and men preferred old coins. A groat was supposed to be worth 4 pence, but the coins were so bad as to become a synonym for worthlessness.

In any case the difference between harvests and distances from markets made violent fluctuations in

prices. There is no general rule to be found. In 1448 corn, presumably wheat, was so cheap that Margaret Paston asked if her husband cared to sell, or would store it. If he stored he must have lost, for the price went lower. Ten years later the price was high, 10*s.* the quarter. In 1465 malt in London fetched 4*s.* the quarter—a good price, while in Yarmouth it was selling for 2*s.* 8*d.* and even 1*s.* 10*d.*

The fall in the price of corn may have some connection with the varying rent of land. When men owned many manors it was no longer possible to manage them all personally. John Paston tried to do so by correspondence with his wife and stewards; but he began the plan which his sons followed of *setting to farm.*

The manor demesne was let to a *farmer* who was to pay a named sum and keep any profits. The Pastons raise the rents at first; the rents are then unpaid and arrears accumulate; at last distraint by driving off the farmer's cattle appears to be the usual proceeding. It looks as if a fair rent had not yet been discovered, nor the method of getting a fresh farmer every year or two condemned. Before the end of the correspondence rents are considerably lowered again, or demesnes let in small parcels to small occupiers, and the family is concerned to find how much less can be got in coin from a paying tenant than used to be made when the master lived there himself.

Had money been the sole standard of value, the fluctuations of coin-values, rents, and prices, especially after 1460, must have driven every farmer and landowner into bankruptcy. But it was possible to barter, to pledge a wood or a set of plate, to carry on a debt till it could be written off, and to consume one's own produce; payments are always in arrear and long credit given.

9. Food

The usual food of the people, as in the North and Midlands, was oatmeal, or, for the middle class oatmeal

or mestlyon (mistling, mixtilion), a mixture of wheat and rye. White wheat bread was preferred by those able to get it, especially in London, but London was distinguished from the rest of England by the excellence of its food and the greediness of its population. A Yarmouth woman supplied Caister Castle with oats. In the midland towns and very likely in Norwich also, oatmeal was brought almost daily from the country and sold cheaply by women hawkers, but the principal commercial crop of the county was barley, grown, not for bread, though this was eaten in some—probably cider—districts, but for malt, of which such large quantities were required that more was imported from Flanders, and of a better quality than the homemade. An inferior kind of malt was also made of drage, or mixed barley and oats. It is noteworthy that at this time the best qualities of wheat, malt, salt, dye-stuffs, armour, leather and cloth were all imported, English produce supplying, though often large quantities, only inferior qualities, and even in these losing custom by fraud and adulteration.

It seems to be usually assumed that the exhaustion of the soil in the fifteenth century accounts for a decrease in corn growing and an increase of wool growing; but there were other causes as well. The corn export to Flanders was falling off, clearly because there was less demand, and Lynn, the corn port of this coast, was suffering. Possibly agriculture was not worse, but better, producing more to the acre. The fall in the price of corn was steady. The glebeland corn of Oxnead, worth £24 about 1420, was only worth £3 0*s.* 4*d.* in 1473, and Agnes Paston did not expect it to recover. There is no hint in the *Letters* of any shortage of food—meat, fish, and oats were plentiful. Beef was salted down in autumn, and fish, chiefly herring, laid in at the beginning of Lent at 4*s.* 6*d.* a horse-load.

Other kitchen necessaries came from London, showing that Norwich was less well supplied than Leicester, Coventry, and other midland towns; spices, treacle (that highly-prized medicine), figs and dates (medical

luxuries), raisins at 8*s.* a jar, sugar, almonds, and quince preserve at 5*s.* a pound, and, even in the third generation, oranges—a proper present for a lady. These articles came from Genoa usually.

10. Norfolk Industries

It is not necessary to assume that the increase of wool growing was at the expense of arable, in Norfolk, in the fifteenth century. In 1444 when John Paston succeeded the Judge, he held over five hundred acres of pasture, heath and marsh in Paston and its neighbourhood. Mautby Marsh, though in 1465 its value, like that of all land, had declined, was then worth £8 a year. A few references prove that John and Margaret possessed large flocks—his and hers were kept distinct. Hellesdon and Drayton provided pasture for over 1500; the loss of a shepherd was a serious matter. A few chance allusions to a tile works and a limekiln suggest that they had other sources of income, but the letters are mainly concerned with land business.

Norwich was not the sole seat of trade in the county. People escaped the hampering restrictions of the gilds by working in villages. Margaret possessed a "manor" in the thriving village of Salle, the cradle of the Boleyns and other county families, who so magnificently rebuilt its church in that century.

In the 'sixties Norfolk weavers were evidently specializing in woven thread materials. All Norwich could not supply enough cloth of the same colour to furnish liveries for John Paston's small retinue. He might, perhaps, have got it in Suffolk, says his wife, but only at two months' notice. On the other hand, Norfolk worsted was so fine that it was "almost like silk," and John and William thought it good enough for their best doublets. Ladies' elegant mufflers of "Norfolk thread" were fashionable and, indeed,

necessary. But Margaret complains of a "feeble choice" in drapers' shops, she can never purchase in Norwich buckram, frieze, or broadcloth, which must come from London, like ladies' girdles and necklaces. Various kinds of material are mentioned, but only four colours: russet, blue, murrey (a purple tint) and tawny (orange), the two latter are the favourite colours of all liveries (*vide* Shakespeare).

The elder generation seem to have had more clothing than the younger. Hose are rather difficult to get. The price of a plain pair is 3*s.*, the same as a plain sword; fine hose cost 8*s.*; a plain, long gown for a man 9*s.* or more. A cap cost 1*s.*; a good shirt 3*s.* 4*d.*

Armour was rather expensive. In 1465 a Jack, or good leather coat protected by metal plates, the coat of a professional foot soldier, cost 26*s.* 8*d.* (2 marks), the same price as a cheap Bible (which would not be a complete one) or two years' barley crop of a farm. A little earlier an entire military outfit of plate armour with weapons and a "shirt" of mail cost 5 marks (£3 6*s.* 8*d.*), the same price as a good copy of the Bible, or a year's rent of a Norwich house (without the ground floor storeroom). In 1444 the same sum would buy three horses; the price of horses remains much the same twenty years later, and cows remain at 6*s.*

II. Politics and Civil War

How much effect was produced on daily life in Norfolk by the political disturbances of 1422–1485 it is difficult to gauge; less than in the maritime counties of the south, perhaps more than in Somerset. In any case not battles and recruiting, but local brawls, and political intrigue in London, were the dislocating forces out of which the fight for the crown arose.

For some twenty years after the premature death of Henry V. a model parliamentary Government had

followed, or set, the best constitutional precedents, while the party leaders were dragging the nation into civil war. The Treaty of Troyes having been correctly signed the ministry economized on the Navy, which was reduced to vanishing point, with the result that the south coast ports were ravaged and the east coast raided. Probably its finance would have ruined the Lancastrian House in any case.

The party leaders—the Beauforts and Suffolk on the one hand, Gloucester, York and the Nevilles on the other—devoted their energies to securing all power and revenue for their own side. From 1440 the former party was in power. Henry VI., who came of age in 1442, adopted Suffolk as his principal minister. After 1447 (when Cardinal Beaufort and the Duke of Gloucester died) he was practically sole minister, with the personal authority of the King and Queen behind him. Whatever may be thought of his foreign policy, it is clear, from the *Paston Letters*, that he, more than any one, was responsible for "livery and maintenance"—the unpunished practice of robbery and murder.

John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, was the surviving member of a family which had sacrificed itself loyally on the battlefields of France, where his father and three brothers fell—a family by tradition ministerial and financial. Such a man was beyond suspicion loyal and patriotic in the conventional sense, which permitted him to secure the profits of office for his own supporters. Because such barefaced partiality was resisted by other noble houses there soon arose a condition of party strife over every appointment and every question, and in every county of England. Suffolk would share with no man, not even with respectable old officers of the King such as Sir Thomas Daniel (the Pastons' friend), and he procured immunity for any law breakers who were of his party. Such a lord as Scales, such a retainer as Sir Thomas Tuddenham, such a lawyer as John Heydon were typical of Suffolk's faction. These were, in Norfolk, the worst fomenters of disorder,

and personal royal interference was used to shield them and to crush their victims. The course of the Yorkist opposition was thus made inevitable by the King and his Prime Minister, and it is little wonder that in Norfolk sympathy was on the side of the opposition, and that its confidence was given to the only man who tried to keep the narrow seas English, Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

The Mowbray Dukes of Norfolk were purely time-servers, who avoided risks till the winner was declared, but being rivals of Suffolk they counted as supporters of York, that weak, greedy, resourceless prince who was little more than a royal puppet of which the Nevilles pulled the strings. The third lord of the East Anglian region was the Earl of Oxford. His principal strength lay in Essex, round Hedingham, but he had a castle at Winch, and large estates which had once been Howard property. Hence a feud between the Veres and the Howards, who had become the leading retainers and practically the acting managers of the inert Mowbrays.

When Sir John Howard (who was afterwards made Duke by Richard III. for a few weeks before Bosworth) showed himself the unscrupulous foe of John Paston, whom he tried to get murdered, John *the youngest* took service with Oxford, and, as Bosworth relieved the county of Howard supremacy for some time, Oxford and Oxford's supporters triumphed.

12. Fastolfe's Will

Sir John Fastolfe, alive or dead, is the presiding genius, not always benevolent, of the Paston family. However famous in literature, it was by his less amiable qualities that he weighed upon the society of Norfolk. One of Bedford's Captains, he had for many years been Seneschal of Anjou and Maine. When disaster beset the arms of England under Suffolk's government, he surrendered his towns and castles with extraordinary

haste and retired home to Caister, to compile a huge bill against the Crown for "compensation" in lieu of his lost profitable offices.

Fastolfe was the hero—or otherwise—of the celebrated Battle of Herrings; he was also a shrewd financier, as every Captain had to be under the military system of those times, when the Crown assigned funds for troops to great men, who in turn contracted with practical Captains. The latter then enlisted men partly for pay, partly in hope of plunder.

Fastolfe invested the profits and plunder of a lifetime in landed property in Norfolk. He had no children, maltreated his stepson, and was little interested in nephews. In his old age he became possessed by a desire to insure with Heaven against the penalties which his avaricious and unscrupulous soul might expect to experience in the future life.

This might be accomplished, according to accepted ideas, by securing that mass should be sung for ever for his soul, and to this end, and as a prominent memorial of his own importance, Fastolfe determined to turn his fine new castle at Caister into a College of priests, well endowed with manors. But he could not endure to part with property during his lifetime, and therefore reckoned on setting up the College by his Will, which was to be entrusted to a number of executors, who were to share the remainder of the property among themselves. Self-interest and mutual jealousy were to constrain Paston, Debenham, Yelverton and the other trustees to act fairly by the priests.

But a Will disposing of any considerable property depended for its effect entirely upon the good offices of the executors. Even if they were all honest, all agreed, and sufficiently influential to obtain the necessary legal powers at reasonable fees, they would have to cope with claims for debts and compensations from all manner of persons extending over years or even generations, and probably with bogus representatives of former owners, for there was no finality, at this time, in any purchase or settlement. The safest method

was to compromise with the most powerful claimants, including the Crown, which would require a large price for a licence to evade the Mortmain Laws.

All this Fastolfe must have known well enough, for he had himself been an executor of the Duke of Bedford's Will, which he had carefully neglected until the other executors were dead. He was, therefore, perpetually altering his Will in the hope of making it the more binding, and his secretaries and clerical friends, Howes and William Worcester, and the learned Friar Brackley, besides others, were well aware of his intentions. At the very end of his life, Howes, Worcester, Brackley and Paston said, Fastolfe resolved to trust everything to John Paston and made him sole inheritor, charged with the foundation of the College. Then the old knight died and the discarded executors charged Paston and his friends with forging the last Will, and took upon themselves to sell the finest estates to the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk; and Howes on his deathbed "confessed" to the forgery. Debenham and Yelverton, presumably, kept the price, and the dukes got Paston fettered by lawsuits and prison, while they forcibly seized or destroyed Cotton, Hellesdon and Drayton (Duke of Suffolk), and Caister (Duke of Norfolk).

It seems to be generally assumed that John Paston was guilty. If so, it is safe to assert that neither his wife nor his sons suspected it. Debenham and Yelverton were exactly as honest and disinterested as Paston himself. Howes and Worcester only rounded upon Paston when they were sure he would give them nothing, and, on their own showing, were either twice perjured or only once. Dr. Brackley bore a higher character than Howes, and was at least disinterested, and on his deathbed he solemnly affirmed Paston true and Howes false. But it is hardly possible now to unravel the tangle.

In the end John *the youngest* made the compromise which his father had refused, and got the all-powerful aid of the Chancellor, Bishop Waynfleet. The priests (whom John *the eldest* had honourably installed at

Caister) were transferred, with their handsome revenues, to Waynfleet's new College at Oxford, Magdalen, and there masses were duly sung. But the Pastons reigned alone in Caister, and no very large part of the property of the artful compiler of Wills was eventually consecrated to his memory or his soul's health.

13. Under Henry VII.

The career of John *the youngest* under Henry VII. illustrates the reign and policy of that remarkable sovereign as distinctly as the earlier letters do the civil troubles. Landowners are no longer allowed to shirk their duties or avoid committing themselves; disorders at home or on the sea are put down, even the army has to keep its discipline.

In similar wise Sir John Paston, whose own marriage had closed the Debenham feud, marries his son to a Heydon and closes the oldest and bitterest family quarrel. Henry VII. is the founder of the English Navy, and Sir John acts as Vice-Admiral for his county and sees his nephew get honour and profit by capturing pirates. Henry was the most just and grateful of monarchs, and the Pastons shared in the rewards bestowed on good servants. Gifts and magnificent fêtes are as characteristic of the national prosperity as of the royal dignity.

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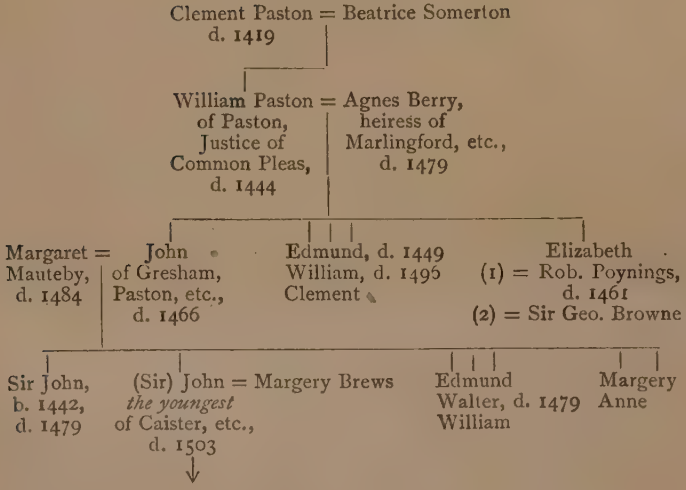
PART I

DOMESTIC LETTERS, 1440–1465

Written before, or not concerned with, the Wars of the Roses

THE PASTON FAMILY
in the XVth century.


Clement Paston = Beatrice Somerton
d. 1419
William Paston = Agnes Berry,
of Paston, heiress of
Justice of Marlingford, etc.,
Common Pleas, d. 1479
d. 1444
Margaret = John Edmund, d. 1449 Elizabeth
Mauteby, of Gresham, William, d. 1496 (1) = Rob. Poynings,
d. 1484 Paston, etc., Clement d. 1461
d. 1466 (2) = Sir Geo. Browne
Sir John, (Sir) John = Margery Brews Edmund Margery
b. 1442, *the youngest* Walter, d. 1479 Anne
d. 1479 of Caister, etc., William
d. 1503

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PART I

1. The Betrothal of John Paston and Margaret Mauteby (About 1440)

To my Worshipful Husband William Paston, be this Letter taken.

Dear Husband, I recommend me to you, &c. Blessed be God I send you good tidings of the coming, and the bringing home, of the Gentlewoman,[1] that ye weeten (*know*) of from Reedham, this same night according to appointment, that ye made there for yourself.

And as for the first acquaintance between John Paston and the said Gentlewoman, she made him Gentle cheer in Gentle wise, and said, he was verily your son; and so I hope there shall need no great Treaty between them.

The Parson of Stockton told me, if ye would buy her a Gown, her mother would give thereto a goodly Fur; the Gown needeth for to be had; and of colour it would be a goodly blew, or else a bright sanguine.

I pray you do buy for me two pipes of gold [thread]. Your [fish] stews do well. The Holy Trinity have you in governance.

Written at Paston in haste the Wednesday next after "Deus qui errantibus;"[2] for default of a good secretary, &c.

Yours
Agnes Paston.

[1] Margaret Mauteby.
[2] First words of Collect for Third Sunday after Easter.

2. A Foreign Raid

To my worshipful Husband John Paston, abiding at Peter-House, in Cambridge.[1]

RIGHT reverend and worshipful husband, I recommend me to you with all my simple heart, and pray you to weet that there came up eleven hundred Flemings at Waxham, whereof were taken and killed and drenchyn (*drowned*) eight hundred, and they had not have been, ye should have been at home this Whitsuntide, and I suppose that ye should be at home ere out long be.

I thank you heartily for my letter, for I had none of you since I spake with you last of for the matter of John Maryot; the Quest passed not off that day, for my Lord of Norfolk (*the Duke*) was in town for Wedyrby's matter, wherefore he would not let it pass off, for further of I know, Fynch nor Bylbys maketh no purveyance for his good (*no provision for Maryot's property*).

No more I write to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, on Trinity Sunday.

Your,
MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich,
Trinity Sunday.

3. John Paston ill (1443)

To my right worshipful husband John Paston, dwelling in the Inner Temple at London, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking God of your amending of the great disease that ye have had, and I thank you for the letter that ye sent me, for by

[1] John Paston apparently finished his education after his marriage to Margaret in 1440.

my troth my mother and I were nought in heart's ease from the time that we wist of your sickness, till we wist verily of your amending.

My Mother behested (*promised*) another Image of Wax of the weight of you, to our Lady of Walsingham, and she sent four Nobles (*1l. 6s. 8d.*) to the four Orders of Friars at Norwich to pray for you, and I have behested to go on Pilgrimage to Walsingham, and to St. Leonard's for you; by my troth I had never so heavy a season as I had from the time that I wist of your sickness, till I wist of your amending, and yet my heart is in no great ease, nor nought shall be, 'till I weet that ye be very whole. Your Father and mine was this day sev'night at Beccles, for a matter of the Prior of Bromholm, and he lay at Gelderstone[1] that night, and was there till it was 9 of the clock, and the other day. And I sent thither for a gown, and my mother said that I should none have then, till I had been there anon, and so they could none get.

My [step] Father Garneys sent me word that he should have been here the next week, and mine Emme (*uncle*) also, and play them here with their Hawks, and they should have me home with them; and so God help me, I shall excuse me of my going thither if I may, for I suppose that I shall readilier have tidings from you here than I should have there. I shall send my Mother a Token that she took (*brought to*) me, for I suppose the time is come that I should send it her, if I keep the behest that I have made; I suppose I have told you what it was; I pray you heartily that [ye] will vouchsafe to send me a Letter, as hastily as ye may, if writing be none disease to you, and that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how your sore do. If I might have had my will, I should have seen you ere this time; I would ye were at home, if it were your ease, and your sore might be as well looked to here as it is there ye be, now lever than a new Gown though it were of Scarlet. I pray you if your sore be whole, and so that ye may endure to ride,

[1] Home of Margaret's mother, now wife of Ralph Garneys.

when my father come to London, that ye will ask leave and come home when the horse should be sent home again, for I hope ye shall be kept as tenderly here as ye be at London. I may none leisure have to do write half a quarter so much as I should say to you if I might speak with you. I shall send you another Letter as hastily as I may. I thank you that ye would vouchsafe to remember my girdle, and that ye would write to me at the time, for I suppose that writing was none ease to you. Almighty God have you in his keeping, and send you health. Written at Oxnead, in right great haste, on St. Michael's Even.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Oxnead.
Saturday, 28th September, 1443. 22 H. VI.

My Mother greet you well, and sendeth you God's blessing and hers; and she prayeth you, and I pray you also, that ye be well dieted of meat and drink, for that is the greatest help that ye may have now to your health-ward. Your Son fareth well, blessed be God!

4. JUDGE PASTON'S LAST ILLNESS (1444)

To my right worthy and worshipful Lord, William Paston, Justice, in haste.

PLEASE it your good Lordship to weet, that the Chief Justice of the King's Bench[1] recommendeth him to you, and is right sorry of the matter that is cause of your none coming hither, but he will do all that he can or may for you. He have had a Sciatica that hath letted him a great while to ride, and dare not yet come on none horse's back, and therefore he hath spoken to the Lords of the Council, and informed them of your sickness and his also, that he may not ride at these next Assizes to East Grinstead; and though those Assizes discontinue pur noun venu dez Justicez, he

[1] The famous Sir John Fortescue.

hopeth to be excused and ye also. And as for the remanent of the Assizes, he shall purvey to be there by water ; and Almighty Jesu make you hale and strong.

Written right simply, the Wednesday next to fore the feast of the Purification of our Lady, at London.

By your most simple Servant,
JAMES GRESHAM.

5. TROUBLE ON THE JUDGE'S DEATH (1445)

To Edmund Paston, of Clifford's Inn, in London, be this Letter taken.

TO mine well beloved Son, I greet you well, and advise you to think once of the day of your father's counsel to learn the law, for he said many times that whosoever should dwell at Paston, should have need to con (*to know how to*) defend himself.

The Vicar of Paston and your Father, in Lent last was, were thorough and accorded, and doles (*marks*) set how broad the way should be, and now he hath pulled up the doles, and saith he will make a ditch from the corner of his wall, right over the way to the new ditch of the great close. And there is a man in Trunch hight Palmer to, that had of your father certain lands in Trunch over seven years, or eight years agone, for corn, and truly hath paid all the years ; and now he hath suffered the corn to be withset (*pledged*) for eight shillings of rent to Gimmingham, which your father paid never ; Geoffry asked Palmer why the rent was not asked in mine husband's time, and Palmer said, for he was a great man, and a wise man of the law, and that was the cause men would not ask him the rent.

I send you the names of the men, that cast down the pit, that was in Genney's Close, written in a bill closed in this Letter.

I send you not this Letter to make you weary of Paston, for I live in hope and (*that*) ye will learn that they shall be made weary of their work, for in good faith I dare well say it was your father's last will to have done

right well to that place, and that can I shew of good proof though men would say nay. God make you right a good man, and send God's blessing and mine. Written in haste at Norwich, the Thursday after Candlemas-day.

Weet of your brother John how many joists will serve the parlour and the chapel at Paston, and what length they must be, and what breadth and thickness they must be, for your father's will was, as I ween verily, that they should be nine inches one way, and seven another way, and purvey therefore that they may be squared there, and sent hither, for here can none such be had in this country; and say to your brother John it were done to think on Stansted church; and I pray you to send me Tidings from beyond sea, for here they are afraid to tell such as be reported.

By your Mother,
AGNES PASTON.

Norwich,
Thursday, 4th of February.

6. PAYING A RELIEF FOR THE MANOR OF SPARHAM (1448)

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this Letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that I was with my Lady Morley on the Saturday next after that ye departed from hence, and told her what answer that ye had of John Butt, and she took it right strangely, and said that she had told you and shewed you enough, whereby ye might have knowledge that the relief ought to be paid to her; and she said she wist well that ye delay it for that she should not have that [be]longeth to her right; and she told me how it was paid in Thomas Chamber's time, when her daughter Hastyngs was wedded; and she said, since that ye will make none end with her, she will sue therefore as law will.

I conceived by her that she had counsel to labour against you therein within right short time, and then I prayed her that she would vouchsafe not to labour against you in this matter till ye came home, and she said nay by her faith, she would no more days give you therein ; she said she had set you so many days to accord with her, and ye had broke them, that she was right weary thereof ; and she said she was but a woman, she must do by her counsel, and [as] her counsel had advised her, so she said she will do ; then I prayed her again that she would tarry till ye came home, and I said I trusted verily that ye would do when ye came home, as it longeth to you to do, and if ye might have very knowledge that she ought of right for to have it, I said I wist well that ye would pay it with right good will ; and told her that ye had searched to have found writing thereof, and ye could none find in none wise ; and she said she wist well there was writing thereof enough, and she hath writing thereof how Sir Robert of Mawteby, and Sir John, and my Grandsire and divers other of my ancestors paid it, and said never nay thereto ; and in no wise I could not get no grant of her to cease till ye came home ; and she bad me that I should do an errand to my mother, and when I came home I did mine errand to her, and she asked me if I had spoken to my Lady of this foresaid matter, and I told her how I had done, and what answer I had ; and she said she should go to my Lady Morley's on the next day, and she should speak to her thereof, and assay to get grant of her to cease of the foresaid matter till that ye come home ; and truly my mother did her devour right faithfully therein, as my Cousin Clere shall tell you when that he speak with you ; and she got grant of my said Lady that there should nought be done against you therein, and ye would accord with her, and do as ye ought to do betwixt this time and Trinity Sunday.

Laurence Reed of Mawteby recommendeth him to you, and prayeth you that ye will vouchsafe to let him buy of you the farm barley [1] that ye should have of him,

[1] Barley paid as rent.

and if ye will let him have it to a reasonable price, he will have it with right a good will, and he prayeth you if ye will that he have it, that ye will vouchsafe to send him word at what price he should have the Comb as hastily as ye may, and else he must be purveyed in other place.

As touching other tidings, I suppose John of Damme shall send you word in a Letter. As it is told me verily Heydon shall not come at London this term.

It is said in this Country that Daniel is out of the King's good grace, and he shall down and all his men, and all that be his well willers, there shall no man be so hardy to do neither say against my Lord of Suffolk, nor none that longeth to him, and all that have done and said against him, they shall sore repent them. Katharine Walsham shall be wedded on the Monday next after Trinity Sunday, as it is told me, to the galant with the great chain; and there is purveyed for her much good array of Gowns, Girdles, and Attires, and much other good array, and he hath purchased a great purchase of five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by the year to give her to her jointure.

I am afraid that John of Sparham is so shuttle-witted, that he will set his goods to mortgage to Heydon, or to some other of your good friends, but if I can hold him in the better, ere ye come home; he hath been arrested since that ye went, and hath had much sorrow at the suit of Master John Stokes of London for ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) that Sparham owed to him; and in good faith he hath had so much sorrow and heaviness that he wist not what he might do; I feel him so disposed that he would have sold and have set to mortgage all that he hath, he had not ruth to whom, so that he might have had money to have holpen himself with; and I entreated him so, that I suppose he will neither sell nor set to mortgage, neither cattle nor other goods of his, till he speak with you; he supposeth that all that is done to him is at the request of the parson of Sparham and Knatysale. I suppose it is alms to comfort him, for in good faith he is right heavy, and

his wife also ; he is not now under arrest, he hath paid his fees, and goeth at largê ; he was arrested at Sparham, of one of Knatysale's men.

Hodge Feke told me that Sym Shepherd is still with Wylly, and if ye will I shall purvey that he shall be brought home ere ye come home. It is told me that he that kept your sheep, was outlawed on Monday, at the suit of Sir Thomas Todenham, and if it be so, ye are not like to keep him long. And as touching that, that ye bad me speak for to Bacton, he saith he is well advised that she said she would never have to do withal, nor he cannot pick that she hath none right to have it, and he will say like as he hath heard her say, and if she speak to him thereof, he will rather hold with you than with her. I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how ye speed in your matter touching Gresham, and how Daniel is in grace. Harry Goneld hath brought to me 40*s*. of Gresham since ye went, and he saith I shall have more ere Whitsuntide, if he may pick it up.

I suppose James Gresham have told you of other things that I have sped since ye went hence. If I hear any strange tidings in this country I shall send you word. I pray you that I may be recommended to my lord Daniel.

The holy Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters touching your right. Written at Norwich, on the Wednesday next after that ye parted hence.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

7. INFLUENCING THE LAW

To the most reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Chancellor of England.

BESEECHETH meekly your gracious Lordship, your own servant and orator John Hauteyn, Chaplain, that where [as] he hath divers suits and actions in law to be sued against Agnes, that was the wife of William Paston, of

the manor of Oxnead, in the County of Norfolk; and for as much as your said beseecher can get no counsel of men of court [1] to be with him in the said matters, because that the said W. Paston was one of the King's Justices, and John Paston son and heir to the said W. Paston is also a man of Court, that it please your good Lordship to assign, and most strictly to command John Heydon Thomas Lyttylton and John Olston to be of counsel with your said beseecher in the said matters, and other that he hath to do against the said Agnes and other, and your said beseecher shall content them well for their labour, and that this be done in the reverence of God, and way of Charity.

JOHN HAUTEYN, Chaplain.

About 1445.

8. PIRATES ON THE NORFOLK COAST (1450)

To John Paston, dwelling in the Inner Inn of the Temple, at London, be this Letter delivered in haste.

SON, I greet you, and send you God's blessing and mine; as for my daughter your wife she fareth well, blessed be God! as a woman in her plight may do, and all your Sons and Daughters.

And for as much as ye will send me no tidings, I send you such as be in this Country; Richard Lynsted came this day from Paston and let me weet, that on Saturday last past, Dravell, half-brother to Warren Harman, was taken with enemies, walking by the Sea side, and have him forth with them, and they took two Pilgrims, a man and a woman, and they robbed the woman and let her go, and led the man to the Sea; and when they knew he was a Pilgrim they gave him money, and set him again on the land; and they have this week taken four Vessels of Winterton, and Happisborough and Eccles.

Men be sore afraid for taking of men, for there be ten

[1] Lawyers: Hauteyn was an old enemy of Judge Paston, from respect to whose memory, no lawyer would undertake this case.

great Vessels of the Enemy's; God give grace that the sea may be better kept than it is now, or else it shall be a perilous dwelling by the sea coast.

I pray you greet well your brethren, and say them that I send them God's blessing and mine, and say William that if Janet Lauton be not paid for the Crimson Coat which Alson Crane wrote to her for in her own name, that then he pay her, and see Alson Crane's name stricken out of her book, for she saith she will ask no man the money but Alson Crane. And I pray you that ye will remember the Letter that I sent you last, and God be with you.

Written at Norwich, the Wednesday next before Saint Gregory (12*th March*).

By your Mother,
AGNES PASTON.

9. A WOODEN HOUSE[1]

To my well beloved Brother,[2] *John Paston, Esq.*

BROTHER Paston, I recommend me unto you, praying you that ye take the labour to speak with Thomas Ratcliff of Framsden [*in Suffolk*] for the deliverance of part of an house which lyeth in his wood at Framsden, which house, the owner hath carried part thereof to Orford, which so departed, the remanent, that remaineth there in his wood, shall do him little good, and it shall hurt greatly the workmen and the owner thereof also, which is my tenant, and (*if*) the house should be set upon my ground.

I write unto you in this behalf, because I understand he will be much advised by you, and if he do anything at my request I shall do as much that shall please him; and also the poor man shall give him two nobles, or twenty shillings, rather than fail; I pray you be as good a mean for him as ye may in this behalf, as my very

[1] The carpenter had put together the frame of the house in the wood, but the owner of the wood refused to let it be removed to Orford.

[2] Brother, here = fellow-lawyer.

trust is in you, and I shall be ready at all times to do that may be to your pleasure, I trust to Jesu, who have you in his keeping, and send you joy of all your ladies.

Written at Letheringham, this Tuesday in Whitsun week.

Your Brother and Friend,
J. WYNGFIELD.

10. A MISUNDERSTANDING. LENT PROVISIONS [March, 1451?]

To my right worshipful Husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, beseeching you that ye be not displeased with me, though my simpleness caused you for to be displeased with me; by my truth it is not my will neither to do nor say that should cause you for to be displeased, and if I have done, I am sorry thereof, and will amend it; wherefore I beseech you to forgive me, and that ye bear none heaviness in your heart against me, for your displeasure should be too heavy to me to endure with.

I send you the Roll that ye sent for, ensealed by the bringer hereof; it was found in your trussing Coffer. As for Herring, I have bought a horse-load for 4*s.* and 6*d.* I can get none Eels yet; as for Bever[1] there is promised me some, but I might not get it yet. I sent to Joan Petche to have an answer for the windows, for she might not come to me; and she sent me word that she had spoken thereof to Thomas Ingham, and he said that he should speak with you himself, and he should accord with you well enough, and said to her it was not her part to desire of him to stop the lights; and also he said it was not his part to do it, because the place is his but for years.

And as for all other errands that ye have commanded for to be done, they shall be done as soon as they may be done. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

[1] Beverage; light drink, probably concocted from herbs, not ale.

Written at Norwich, on the Monday next after Saint Edward.

Yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

11. TURNING THE ROAD [17th Nov., 1451?]

To John Paston, dwelling in the Temple at London, be this Letter delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and let you weet, that, on the Sunday before Saint Edmond, after even Song, Agnes Ball come to me to my closet (*pew*) and bad me good even, and Clement Spicer with her; and I asked him what he would; and he asked me why I had stopped in the King's way; and I said to him, I stopped no way but mine own, and asked him why he had sold my land to John Ball, and he swore he was never accorded with your father; and I told him if his father had done as he did, he would have been ashamed to have said as he said; and all that time Waryn Herman leaned over the parclose and listened what we said; and said that the change was a rewly change, for the town[1] was undo thereby, and is the worse by an 100*l.* And I told him it was no courtesy to meddle him in a matter, but if (*unless*) he were called to council; and proudly going forth with me in the church, he said, the stopping of the way should cost me twenty nobles (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) and yet it should down again. And I let him weet, he that put it down should pay therefore.

Also he said that it was well done that I set men to work to owl (*hood-wink*) many while I was here, but in the end I shall lose my cost. Then he asked me why I had away his hay at Walsham, saying to me he would he had wist it, when it was carried, and he should a letted it; and I told him it was mine own ground, and for mine own I would hold it; and he bad me take four acres and go no farther; and thus churtly he departed

[1] *I.e.*, the village of Paston. Judge Paston had obtained leave to turn the high road. See Letter 5.

from me in the church-yard. And since I spake with a certain man, and asked him if he heard ought say why the dinner was made at Norfolk's house, and he told me, [he] heard say that certain men had sent to London to get a Commission out of the Chancery to put down again the wall and the dyke. I received your letter by Robert Repps this day, after this Letter written thus far; I have read it, but I can give you none answer more than I have written, save the wife of Harman hath the name of our Lady, whose blessing ye have and mine. Written at Paston, on the day after Saint Edmond.

By your Mother,
AGNES PASTON.

12. A TOWN HOUSE IN NORWICH (June, 1451)

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that it was told me this week that there is a fair place to sell in St. Laurence's parish, and standeth near the church, and by the water side, the which place Topps hath to sell, Pyte a Lyster (*a Dyer*) bought it of Topps, and now for default of payment Topps hath entered again therein, and shall sell it in haste, as it is told me, the said Lyster dwelleth therein at this time, but he shall out, for he is held right a poor man; I suppose if ye like to buy it, when ye come home ye shall mow[1] have it of Topps as good cheap or better than another should.

As for tidings we have none good in this country, I pray God send us good; it was told me that Richard Southwell hath entered in the manor of Hale, the which is the Lady Boys', and keepeth it with strength with such another Fellowship as it hath been at Braston, and wasteth and despoileth all that there is; and the

[1] Mow = be able to.

Lady Boys, as it is told me, is to London to complain to the King and to the Lords thereof; it seemeth it was not for nought that he held with Charles and his Fellowship.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to speak to James Gloys[1] to buy the Unguentum Album[2] that I spake to him for; and that ye will remember your fair Daughter's Girdle.

I hope ye shall be at home so soon that I will write no more tidings to you. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all that ye will speed well in. Written at Norwich on the Ascension day.

Yours
MARGARET PASTON.

13. LAW AND PHYSIC (1451)

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that I have spoken with my Lady Felbrigg of that ye bade me speak to her of, and she said plainly to me, that she would not, nor never was advised, neither to let the Lord Molyns nor none other to have their intents as for that matter, while that she liveth; and she was right evil paid with[3] Sauter that should report as it was told you that he should have reported; and she made right much of you, and said that she would not that no servant of hers should report nothing that should be against you, otherwise than she would that your servants should do or say against her; and if either your servants did against her, or any of hers against you, she would that it should be reformed betwixt you and her, and that ye

[1] The chaplain and secretary.
[2] White ointment.
[3] Was badly treated by. Moleyns was Paston's enemy. The family of Sir S. Felbrygg, or Felbridge, were friendly neighbours.

might be all one; for she said in good faith she desired your friendship; and as for the report of Sauter, she said, she supposed that he would not report so, and if she might know that he did, she would blame him therefore; I told her that it was told me since that ye rode, and that it grieved me more that the said Sauter should report as he did, than it had been reported of another, inasmuch as I had ought him good will before; and she prayed me that I should not believe such reports till I know the truth.

I was at Topps's at dinner on saint Peter's day, there my Lady Felbrigg and other Gentlewomen desired to have had you there; they said, they should all have been the merrier if ye had been there. My Cousin Topps hath much care till she hears good tidings of her brother's matter, she told me that they should keep a day on Monday next coming betwixt her brother and Sir Andrew Ogarde and Wyndham; I pray you send me word how they speed, and how ye speed in your own matters also.

Also, I pray you heartily that ye will send me a pot with Treacle in haste, for I have been right evil at ease, and your Daughter both, since that ye yeden (*went*) hence, and one of the tallest young men of this parish lyeth sick, and hath a great Myrr (*murrain* ?) how he shall do God knoweth.

I have sent my Uncle Berney the pot with treacle that ye did buy for him, mine aunt recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to do for her as the bill maketh mention of, that I send you with this letter, and as ye think best for to do therein. Sir Harry Inglos is passed to God this night, whose soul God assoil; and was carried forth this day at nine of the clock to Saint Faith's, and there shall be buried.

If ye desire to buy any of his stuff, I pray you send me word thereof in haste, and I shall speak to Robert Inglos, and to Wichingham thereof; I suppose they be Executors. The Blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich in haste on the Thursday next after Saint Peter (*29th June*).

I pray you trust not to the Sheriff for no fair language.

Yours, M. P.
(MARGARET PASTON.)

14. BOARDING OUT A YOUNG LADY

To my right worshipful Cousin Margaret Paston be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and well beloved cousin I commend me to you as heartily as I can, thanking you of your good cheer the last time I was with you; and, worshipful cousin, please it you to call unto your remembrance, I wrote unto you for my cousin Anneys Loveday to have been in your service, and I received from you a letter that your will was good, but [you] durst not to unto the time ye had spoken with my cousin your husband.

Worshipful cousin, I have laboured for her in other places, but I cannot have mine intent as yet, wherefore if that it please you to have her with you unto the time that a mistress may be purveyed for her, I pray you thereof, and I shall content you for her board, that ye shall be well pleased; for, cousin, and I had a wife, I would not care[1] for her; and there as she is, she is not well at her ease, for she is at Robert Lethum's,[2] and therefore I pray you heartily, that ye will tender this my writing, and I beseech you that in case be that ye will fulfil it, that ye will send my cousin William Staunton for her, and I shall keep you true promise, as I have before written; and I beseech Almighty Jesu preserve you. Written at Heveningham on the 7th day of May, &c.

Your own Cousin,
JOHN HEVENINGHAM, Knight.

[1] Would not be anxious. He was then a widower.
[2] Lethum was chief of a band of rioters.

15. Alderman Boleyn buying Blickling (1452)

To my right worshipful husband John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I commend me to you, I pray you that ye will do buy two dozen trenchers, for I can none get in this town; also I pray you that ye will send me a Book with Chardeqweyns[1] that I may have of in the morning, for the air be not wholesome in this town, therefore I pray you heartily let John Suffield bring it home with him.

No more, but the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written on St. Leonard's even.

My uncle Philip commends him to you, and he hath been so sick since that I came to Reedham, that I wend he should never have escaped it, nor not is like to do, but if he have ready help, and therefore he shall into Suffolk this next week, to mine aunt, for there is a good Physician, and he shall look to him.

My Lady Hastyngs told me that Heydon hath spoken to Geoffrey Boleyn of London, and is agreed with him that he should bargain with Sir John Fastolf to buy the manor of Blickling, as it were for himself, and if Boleyn buy it, in truth Heydon shall have it.

I came to Norwich on Soul mass day (*2nd November*).

Yours,

Margaret Paston.

16. News from Norwich [1452?]

This Letter be delivered to John Paston, being at London, in the Inner Inn of the Temple.

I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, and as touching the matter which ye desired my Cousin Clere should write for, she hath done, and I send you the copy closed in this Letter. As for the enquiry,

[1] A pound of preserved quinces.

I have sent by Pynchemore to enquire and sent mine own man to William Bacton, and done him enquire in divers places, and I can hear no word of none such enquirance, I wot not what it meaneth. Robert Hill was at Paston this week, and the man that dwelled in Bowers place is out thereof, and said to Robert he durst no longer abide therein, for Waryn Herman sayeth to him it is his place. As for Coket's matter, my daughter your wife told me yester even, the man that sueth him will now stand to your award.[1]

Bertholomew White is condemned in Forncet Court in 40 marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) as it is said.

Item, as for Talfas, the Sheriffs have behest to do all the favour they may, I sent the parson of St. Edmund's to Gilbert, and he said there was come a new writ for to have him up by the 15th day of Saint Martin, and how Caly had been at home, and desired to carry up Talfas on his own cost, and give him good wages.

Item, John Osbern said to me this day that he supposed they will not have him up before Easter, and Margaret Talfas said to me the same day, that men told her that he should never have end till he were at London, and asked me counsel, whether she might give the Sheriffs[2] silver, or none, and I told her if she did, I supposed she should find them the more friendly.

Item, as for Horwelbury I send you a bill of all the receipts since the death of your father, and a copy written on the back how your father let it to farm to the said Gurney; I would ye should write Gurney and charge him to meet with you from Londonward, and at the least way let him purvey ten pounds for [he] oweth by my reckoning at Michaelmas last past, beside your father's debt, 18*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.* If ye would write to him to bring surety both for your father's debt and mine, and pay by days, so that the man might live and pay us, I would forgive him of the old arrearages ten pounds and he might be made to pay 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year, on that condition I would forgive him ten pounds, and

[1] Accept your decision. [2] Under-sheriffs.

so thinketh me he should have cause to pray for your father and me, and [so] it was let in my father's time. I feel by Robert, his wife is right loth to go thence, she said that she had lever I should have all her goods after her day than they should go out thereof.

Item, John Dam told me that the Lady Boys will sell a place called Hales, but he saith she speaketh it privily, and saith it is not [en]tayled, as John Dam know, which will she hath said as largely of other things that hath not been so.

Item, he told me as he heard said, Sir John Fastolf hath sold Hellesden to Boleyn of London, and if it be so,[1] it seemeth he will sell more, wherefore I pray you, as ye will have my love and my blessing, that ye will help and do your devoir that some thing were purchased for your two brethen ; I suppose that Sir John Fastolf, and he were spoke to, would be gladder to let his Kinsmen have part than strange men ; assay him in my name of such places as ye suppose is most clear.

It is said in this country that my Lord of Norfolk saith Sir John Fastolf hath given him Caister, and he will have [it] plainly. I send you a bill of Osbern's hand, which was the answer of the Sheriff and John of Dam.

John, bring me my Letter home with you, and my cousin Clere's copy of her Letter, and the copy of the receipt of Horwellbury, and recommend me to Lomner, and tell him his best beloved fareth well, but she is not yet come to Norwich, for they die yet, but not so sore as they did, and God be with you. Written at Norwich, in right great haste, the 16th day of November.

By your Mother,
AGNES PASTON.

17. DEATHS (1453)

To my welbeloved Son John Paston.

SON I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, and let you weet that Robert Hill came homeward

[1] But it was not so, nor the rumour about Caister.

by Orwellbury, and Gurney telled him he had been at London for money and could not speeden, and behested Robert that he should send me money by you ; I pray forget it not as ye come homeward, and speak sadly (*seriously*) for another Farmer.

And as for tydings Philip Berney [1] is passed to God on Monday last past with the greatest pain that ever I saw man ; and on Tuesday Sir John Heveningham yede (*went*) to his church and heard three masses, and came home again, never merrier, and said to his wife that he would go say a little devotion in his garden, and then he would dine ; and forthwith he felt a fainting in his leg and sit down ; this was at nine of the clock, and he was dead ere noon.

My Cousin Clere prays you that ye let no man see her Letter, which is ensealed under my seal. I pray you that you will pay your brother William for four ounces and an half of silk as he paid, which he sent me by William Taverner, and bring with you a quarter of an ounce even like of the same that I send you closed in this Letter ; and say your brother William that his horse hath one sarcy and great running sores in his legs. God have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, on Saint Thomas's even in great haste. (*6th July.*)

By your Mother,

AGNES PASTON.

18. CLEMENT'S EDUCATION (1458)

Errands to London of Agnes Paston, the 28th day of January, the year of King Henry VI. the 36th (1458).

TO pray Greenfield to send me faithfully word by writing, how Clement Paston hath done his devoir in Learning. And if he hath not done well, nor will not amend, pray him that he will truly belash him, till he will amend ; and so did the last Master, and the best that ever he had at Cambridge.

[1] He died of wounds ; he was uncle to Margaret, and grandson of Sir J. Heveningham, who probably died of the pestilence.

And say Greenfield, that if he will take upon him to bring him into good Rule and Learning, that I may verily know he doth his devoir, I will give him 10 Marks (*6l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for his labour, for I had lever he were fairly buried than lost for default.

Item, to see how many Gowns Clement hath, and they that be bare, let them be raised.

He hath a short green Gown and a short muster-develers Gown were never raised.

And a short blue Gown, that was raised, and made of a side (*long*) Gown, when I was last at London ; and a side Russet Gown furred with beaver was made this time two years. And a side Murrey Gown was made this time twelvemonth.

Item, to do make me six Spoons of eight ounces of troy weight, well fashioned and double gilt.

And say Elizabeth Paston that she must use herself to work readily, as other Gentlewomen do, and somewhat to help herself therewith.

Item, to pay the Lady Pole 26*s.* and 8*d.* for her board.

And if Greenfield have done well his devoir to Clement, or will do his devoir, give him the noble (6*s.* 8*d.*).

AGNES PASTON.

19. A MOTHER'S BLESSING (1458?)

To my well beloved Son, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

SON, I greet you well, and let you weet, that for as much as your brother Clement letteth me weet that ye desire faithfully my blessing ; that blessing that I prayed your father to give you the last day that ever he spake, and the blessing of all saints under heaven, and mine mote come to you all days and times ; and think verily none other but that ye have it, and shall have it, with that (*on condition*) that I find you kind and willing to the

weal of your Father's soul, and to the welfare of your brethren.

By my counsel dispose yourself as much as ye may to have less to do in the world; your Father said, "In little business lyeth much rest." This world is but a thoroughfare, and full of woe; and, when we depart therefrom, right nought bear with us, but our good deeds and ill; and there knoweth no man how soon God will clepe him; and therefore it is good for every creature to be ready. Whom God visiteth him he loveth.

And as for your brethern they will I know certainly labour all that in them lyeth for you. Our Lord have you in his blessed keeping, body and soul. Written at Norwich, the 29th day of October.

By your Mother,

AGNES PASTON.

20. HOUSE SHORTAGE IN NORWICH (1453)

To my right worshipful Master, John Paston, he this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that I have spoke with Newman for his place, and I am through with him therefore, but he would not let it in no wise less than five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) I told him that sickerly ye should not know but that I hired it of him for three pounds, I said as for the noble, I should pay of mine own purse, that ye should no knowledge have thereof; and this day I have had in two cartful of hay, and your stable shall be made I hope this next week. I could not get no grant of him to have the warehouse; he saith if he may in any wise forbear it hereafter, ye shall have it, but he will not grant it in no covenant. He hath granted me the house betwixt the vault and the warehouse, and that, he said, he granted not you.

And as for the chamber that ye assigned to mine

uncle,[1] God hath purveyed (*provided*) for him as his will is; he passed to God on Monday last past, at eleven of the clock before noon, and Sir John Heveningham passed to God on Tuesday last past, whose souls both God assoil! his sickness took him on Tuesday at nine of the clock before noon, and by two afternoon he was dead.

I have begun your Inventory that should have been made ere this time, if I had been well at ease; I hope to make an end thereof, and of other things both this next week, and be in that other place, if God send me health. I must do purvey for much stuff ere I come there, for there is neither boards nor other stuff that must needs be had ere we come there; and Richard hath gathered but little money since he came from you. I have sent John Norwood this day to Greshan, Besingham, and Matlaske, to get as much money as he may. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on the Utas day (*octave*) of Peter and Paul (*29th June*).

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

From the close of another letter on business.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to send me another sugar loaf, for my old is done; and also that ye will do make a girdle for your Daughter, for she hath need thereof. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich, in haste, on the Tuesday next before Saint Thomas's day (*7th July*).

Paper[2] is dainty.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

[1] Philip Berney.

[2] "Paper is dainty," this, I believe, is the only letter in which a want of paper is complained of. The Letter is written upon a piece nearly square, out of which a quarter had been cut before the letter was written. (F.)

21. Robbers. Shortage of Cloth (1460?)

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you, pleaseth you to weet, that mine Aunt Moundford hath desired me to write to you, beseeching you that ye will vouchsafe to chevise (*borrow*) for her at London twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) for to be paid to Master Ponyngs, either on Saturday or Sunday, which shall be Saint Andrew's day, in discharging of them that be bounden to Master Ponyngs of the said twenty marks for the Wardship of her daughter, the which twenty marks she hath delivered to me in gold for you to have at your coming home, for she dare not adventure her money to be brought up to London for fear of robbing, for it is said here that there goeth many thieves betwixt this and London, which causeth her to beseech you to content the said money in discharging of the matter, and of them that be bounden, for she would for no good[1] that the day were broken; and she thanketh you heartily for the great labour and business that ye have had in that matter, and in all others touching her and hers, wherefore she saith she is ever bounden to be your Beadswoman, and ever will be while she liveth.

My Cousin, her son, and his wife recommendeth them unto you, beseeching you that ye will vouchsafe to be their good Master, as ye have been afore time; for they be informed that Daniel[2] is come to Rising Castle, and his men make their boast that their Master shall be again at Brayston within short time.

Furthermore, as for the matter that my son wrote to me for the box whereon was written *False Carte Sproute*, that I should enquire of William Worcester where it were; the said William was not at home since that I had his letter, but as soon as he cometh home I shall enquire of him, and send you an answer. As

[1] At no price.

[2] See Appendix I.

touching your Liveries, there can none be gotten here of that colour that ye would have of, neither murrey nor blue, nor good russet, underneath 3*s.* the yard, at the lowest price, and yet is there not enough of one cloth and colour to serve you; and as for to be purveyed in Suffolk, it will not be purveyed not now against this time, without they had had warning at Michaelmas, as I am informed: and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on Saint Katherine's day (25*th November*).

By Your,
MARGARET PASTON.

22. THE VICAR'S TROUBLES (1460?)

To my right reverend Mistress, Agnes Paston, be this Letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Mistress, I recommend me unto you thanking you of the great cheer that ye made me the last time that I was with you; Mistress, in all your goods and occupations that lyeth in my simple power to do in word, will, and deed, I have do my diligence and my power thereto, so I be saved before God; and have owen to your person right hearty love, for the which I am right ill acquit and it be as I understand it, for it is do me to weet, that I am sued with more of my Parishioners, for a rescue making upon the officers of the Sheriff;[1] and I take God to record that it is wrongfully do unto us. And the great fray that they made in the time of Mass, it ravished my wits, and made me full heavily disposed; I pray Jesu give them grace to repent them thereof, that they that caused it may stand out of peril of soul.

Mistress, at the reverence of God, and as ever I may do service that may be pleasing unto you, send me

[1] The sheriff's officers having arrested a man during mass, the congregation rescued him: the Vicar is indicted for resisting the sheriff and has fled to Bromholm Priory.

justly word by the bringer of this bill how ye will that I be guided; for it is told me that, if I be taken, I may no other remedy have, but straight to prison; for the which I have sold away 20*s.* worth of Stuff, and the residue of my stuff I have put it in sure hand, for truly I will not abide the jeopardy of the suit; I have lever to go as far as my feet may bear me; nevertheless as ye command me to do, so it be not to my great hurt, I will fulfil it. No more to you at this time, but God send you that grace, that ye may come to his bliss. Written at Bromholm, in great haste.

By Your,

SIR ROBERT WILLIAMSON.

23. A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE (*before* 1465)

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, be this Letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, please you to weet that I was at Norwich this week to purvey such things as needeth me against this winter; and I was at my Mother's, and while I was there, there came in one Wrothe, a kinsman of Elizabeth Clere's and he saw your Daughter and praised her to my Mother, and said that she was a goodly young woman; and my Mother prayed him for to get for her one good marriage if he knew any; and he said he knew one should be of a 300 marks (200*l.*) by year, the which is Sir John Cley's Son, that is Chamberlayn with my Lady of York, and he is of age of 18 years old; if ye think it be for to be spoken of, my Mother thinks that it should be got for less money now in this world than it should be hereafter, either that one, or some other good marriage.

Item, I spake with master John Estgate for Pykering's matter after your intent of the matter of the Letter that ye sent home, and he said to me he should write to you how he had done therein, and so he sent you

a Letter, the which was sent you by John Wodehouse's man with other Letters.

As for answer [of] other matters, Daubeney telleth me he wrote to you. I beseech Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Caister, the Sunday next after Saint Martin.

By your
MARGARET PASTON.

24. A SATIRICAL CHRISTMAS GREETING (1464?)

To my right worshipful Master and Brother John Paston, this Letter be taken.

RIGHT worshipful and reverent Master and Brother, with all my service I recommend me unto you, please it unto your great Wisdom to have in your discreet remembrance the strait order on which we be professed, and on which ye are bounden to keep your residence and specially on this time of Christmas amongst your Confreres of this Holy Order, the Temple of Syon;[1] for unless that ye keep duly the points of your holy Religion, our Master Thomas Babyngton, Master and Sovereign of our order, by the assent of his Brethren, be advised to award against you right sharp and hasty process to do call you to do your observance, and to obey the points of your religion, which were unto me great heaviness. Wherefore I, as he that hath most greatest cause, and is most bounden unto your great gentleness, and also whom nature and kin most specially, before every of all our Brethren, binden me to owe and will you good will and true heart, considering the great time of penance ye have been in[2] from soon upon Michaelmas hitherto, that is to say in relieving and sustenance of your even christian[3] and also in the

[1] This satirical letter was probably written by a fellow lawyer of the Temple. Babington was Master. The Temple had been the home of the Knights Templars ("Of the Temple of Sion"). The writer derides Paston's niggardliness and his imprisonment, at that time, in the Fleet.

[2] *I.e.*, in prison, obliged to pay fees and bribes.

[3] Fellow-christian.

charitable and meritory deed of Alms-doing, that is to say, in plenteous and liberal Gifts, which is more preciouser than gold or silver, which hath not been at all times to your great ease, neither heart's pleasaunce but rather to your great disease and intolerable pain, and where God's Law and man's Law accord, that it shall not be lawful to none earthly man to be so liberal and plenteous of that that God sendeth him, that he should so dispose it so that he should nought have to live by; and for as much as I have perfect knowledge of your frail and natural disposition, so set unto them that be needy and hungry, that of yourself ye have no might, neither power to abstain and rule yourself, but all so long as God sendeth and giveth you, whereof to dispose and help your even Cristen, ye must needs dispose it forth amongst your even Cristen, I counsel you that in all so hasty and goodly time as ye can, to come unto your holy Brethren that be of this devout and close counsel, to the intent that ye might be advertised and learned by them the good rule and measure that ye ought and should have in the disposition and dealing of your Alms.

And also sithen ye have chosen you a place in this season of Advent, in which ye have had a reasonable leisure and space to do your penance in, which draweth fast to an end, which hath been a convenient place as for the season of the year, and now it draweth fast unto Christmas, on which time every true Christian man should be merry, jocund, and glad; and sithen there is no place which by likelihood of reason ye should find in your heart to be so glad and jocund in, as ye should be in the place of your profession amongst your holy Brethren, in which place in this season of the year it is accustomed to be all manner of disport, like as it is not unknown to your wise discretion; wherefore as my simple reason leadeth me, your great discretion should rule you, that ye should approach nigh the place of your holy religion in all so hasty time as ye could or might, of whose coming all your said Brethren would be glad and fain, and in especial I your Servant and

Brother, like as I am most singular bounden to the increase of your prosperity and welfare, which I shall ever desire with God's mercy, which have you under his blessed and favourable protection. Written in the Temple of Syon, the 3d day of December, in great haste.

By your Servant and Brother,

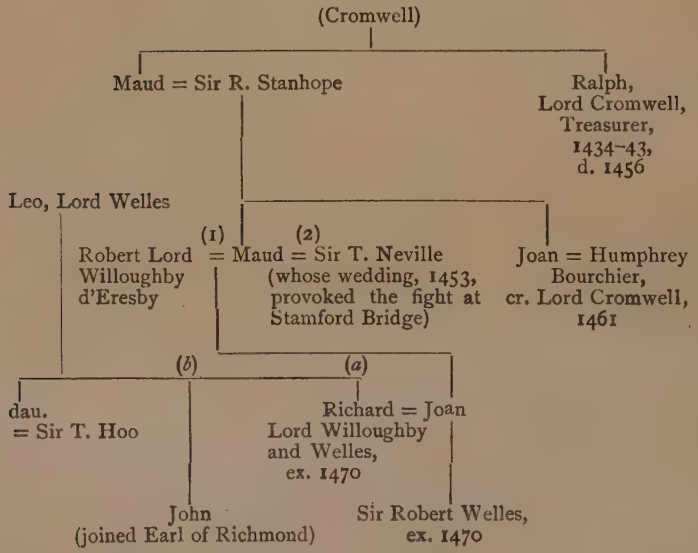
T.[1]

[1] Possibly one Thomas Fountaine, of Salle, near Norwich, by the curious signature. (F.)

PART II

THE INCREASE OF DISORDER, 1448–1452

THE CROMWELL CONNECTION


(Cromwell)
Maud = Sir R. Stanhope
Ralph, Lord Cromwell, Treasurer, 1434–43, d. 1456
Leo, Lord Welles
(1)
(2)
Robert Lord Willoughby d'Eresby
= Maud = Sir T. Neville (whose wedding, 1453, provoked the fight at Stamford Bridge)
Joan = Humphrey Bourchier, cr. Lord Cromwell, 1461
(b)
(a)
dau. = Sir T. Hoo
Richard = Joan Lord Willoughby and Welles, ex. 1470
John (joined Earl of Richmond)
Sir Robert Welles, ex. 1470

See also Appendix III.

Notes on eminent persons will be found in Appendices I. and III.

PART II

25. Lord Moleyns will Bargain for Gresham (1448?)

To the worshipful Father in God, and my right good Lord, the Bishop of Winchester [*Wm. Patten of Waynfleet*].

[Moleyns had forcibly driven the Pastons out of Gresham Castle in February, 1448.]

Worshipful Father in God, and my right good Lord, as heartily as I can, I recommend me to your good Lordship, to the which please it to weet, that I have received your Letter; by the which I understand the daily suit to your Lordship as of Paston, as for the matter betwixt him and me, wherein also I feel, that he is willed that communication and treaty should be had, betwixt his Counsel and mine now at Midsummer; to the which, my Lord, I am at the reverence of your Lordship well agreed, and have sent to my Counsel at London, after the seeing of this your last Letter as for the Treaty betwixt him and me, and that they should give full attendance to the end of the matter between the said Paston and me, as though I were present with them.

And my Lord it were too great a thing, and it lay in my power, but I would do at the reverence of your Lordship, unless that it should hurt me too greatly; which I wote well your Lordship would never desire.

And God for his mercy have you, right worshipful Father in God, and my right good Lord, in his blessed keeping

Written with mine own chancery hand in haste, the 13th day of June, at Teffaunt.

Very heartily,
Your
MOLYNS.

26. MARGARET PASTON FORTIFIES HER HOUSE

To my right worshipful Husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, and pray you to get some Cross Bows and Wyndacs [1] to bind them with and Quarrels,[2] for your houses here [3] be so low that there may none man shoot out with no long bow, though we had never so much need.

I suppose ye should have such things of Sir John Fastolf, if ye would send to him ; and also I would ye should get two or three short Pole-axes to keep with doors, and as many Jacks, and ye may.

Partrich and his fellowship [4] are sore afraid that ye would enter again upon them, and they have made great ordnance within the house, and it is told me they have made bars to bar the doors cross wise, and they have made wickets on every quarter of the house to shoot out at, both with bows and with hand-guns ; and the holes that be made for hand-guns they be scarce knee high from the plancher (*floor*) and of such holes be made five, there can none man shoot out at them with no hand-bows.

Purry fell in fellowship with William Hasard at Quarles's, and told him that he would come and drink with Partrich and with him, and he said he should be welcome, and after noon he went thither for to espy what they did and what fellowship they had with them ; and when he came thither the doors were fast sparred and there were none folks with them but Mariott, and

[1] Windacs are what we now call grappling irons, with which the bow-string is drawn home. (F.)

[2] Square-headed metal bolts shot from cross-bows.

[3] In or near Gresham.

[4] Lord Moleyns' men who were now holding Gresham Castle.

Capron and his wife, and Quarles's wife, and another man in a black, went somewhat halting, I suppose by his words that it was Norfolk of Gimmingham; and the said Purry espied all these foresaid things.

And Mariott and his fellowship had much great language that shall be told you when ye come home.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to do buy for me one lb. of Almonds and one lb. of sugar, that ye will do buy some frieze to make of your child his gowns, ye shall have best cheap, and best choice of Hay's wife, as it is told me. And that ye will buy a yard of broad cloth of black for one hood for me of 44*d.* or four Shillings a yard, for there is neither good cloth nor good frieze in this town. As for the child his gowns and I have them, I will do them maken (*have them made*).

The Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters.

MARGARET PASTON.

27. LORD MOLEYNS TAKES THE GRESHAM RENTS (1449)

To my trusty and well beloved, the Vicar and Tenants of my Lordship of Gresham.

TRUSTY and well beloved Friends, I greet you well, and put you all out of doubt for all that ye have done for me; and the money that ye pay to my well beloved Servant John Partrich, I will be your warrant as for your discharge, and save you harmless against all those that would grieve you, to my power.

And as heartily as I can, I thank you of the good will ye have had, and have towards me; and as to the title of right that I have to the Lordship of Gresham [it] shall within short time be known, and by the law so determined, that ye shall all be glad that hath ought me your good will therein.

And Almighty God keep you, and by his grace I shall be with you soon after the Parliament is ended.

Written at London, on Our Lady even last past. (24 *March*)

ROBERT HUNGERFORD,
LORD MOLYNS.

28. THE KING FAVOURS LORD MOLEYNS (1450)

To our trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire.

By the King.

TRUSTY and well-beloved, for as much as our right trusty and well-beloved the Lord Moleyns is by our special desire and commandment waiting upon us, and now for divers considerations moving us, We purpose to send him into certain places for to execute our commandments, for the which he ne may (*cannot*) be attendant to be in our Counties of Norfolk and Suffolk at the time of our Commissioners sitting upon our Commission of Oyer Determiner within the same our Counties. We therefore desire and pray you, that considering his attendance upon us, and that he must apply him to execute our Commandment, ye will respite (*delay*) as for any thing attempting against him, as for any matters that ye have to do, or say against him, or any other of his Servants, wellwillers, or Tenants, because of him, unto time he shall mowe be (*be able to be*) present to answer thereunto; wherein ye shall minister unto us cause of pleasure, and over that, deserve of us right good thanks. Given under our Signet at our palace of Westminster, the 18th day of September.

29. THE SHERIFF COWED BY LORD MOLEYNS (1451)

To my right reverend and worshipful Master, John Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it your mastership to weet, that I have spoken with the Sheriff at his place, moving to him, as for that,[1]

[1] A gift, doubtless of money. Moleyns had been acquitted, but the men who carried out his orders at Gresham were going to be tried

that was left with his Undersheriff, it is your will he should send a man of his for it; for though it were more ye would gladly he should take it; he thanked you, and said his Undersheriff was at London, and himself had none deserved, and if he had he would have taken it. And when I departed from him I desired him again to send therefore, and then he said it should abide till ye came home, whereby I conceive he would have it, and be glad to take it. Moreover I remembered him of his promises made before to you at London, when he took his oath and charge, and that ye were with him when he took his oath, and other divers times; and for the promises made by him to you at that time, and other times at the Oyer Determiner at Lynn, ye proposed you, by the trust that ye have in him, for to attempt and rear actions that should be to the avail of him and of his office: he would have known what the actions should be; I said I could not tell him, and then he said he would do for you that he may, except for the acquittal of the Lord Molyns's men, insomuch as the King hath written to him for to shew favour to the Lord Molyns and his men, and as he saith the indictment longeth to the King and not to you, and the Lord Molyns [is] a great Lord. Also, as he saith, now late the Lord Molyns hath sent him a Letter, and my Lord of Norfolk another, for to shew favour in these indictments, he dare not abide the jeopardy of that, that he should offend the King's commandment, he know not how the King may be informed of him, and what shall be said to him.

And then I said, as for any jeopardy that he should abide in any thing that he doth for you, or by your desire, ye have offered him, and will perform it, sufficient surety for to save him harmless, and therefore I supposed there would none reasonable man think but that he might do for you without any jeopardy; and then he said, he might none surety take that passed an hundred pounds; and the Lord Molyns is a great Lord, he might soon cause him to lose that and much more; then I said, by that mean, in default of a Sheriff, every man may

be put from his livelihood ;[1] and then he said, if it were for the livelihood men would take them the nearer for to abide a jeopardy,[2] but by his faith, as he swore, if the King wrote again to him he will no longer abide the jeopardy of the King's writing, but he trusteth to God to impannel such men as should to his knowledge be indifferent, and none common Jurors.

As me seemeth, it would do good and ye would get a commandment of the King to the Sheriff for to shew you favour, and to impannel Gentlemen, and not for to favour none such riots, &c., for he said that he sent you the Letter that the King sent him, and ye said, a man should get such (*an*) one for a noble.

Item, I remembered him of the promises that he made to Timperley, and that if he would make you very true promise ye would reward him as much as he would desire, or any other reasonable man for him, and as much or more than any adversary ye have would give him ; then he said he took never no money of none of them all ; there was proffered him at Walsingham for the Lord Molyns twenty Nobles (*6l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) he had not a penny ; moreover I proffered him, if he would make you a promise that ye might verily trust upon him, ye would give him in hand as he would desire, or to leave a sum if he would have named it in a mean (*middle*) man's hand, and such as he hath trust to ; and then he said, if he might do for you, or if he do any thing for you, then he will take your money with a good will ; and other promise I could not have of him, but that he would do for you all that he may, except for the indictments ; I conceive verily he hath made promise to do his part that they shall be acquitted, but I suppose he hath made none other promise against you for the livelihood, but he looketh after a great bribe, but it is not [wise] for to trust him verily, without that he may not choose.

I suppose he had no writing from my Lord of Norfolk as he said.

[1] Lyvelode, a man's property by which he lives.
[2] Would be more cautious about facing a risk

I was at Framlingham for to have spoken with Tymperley, Debenham, or Berry, and they were all out; my Lord, (*the Duke*) as he came from London he was at Ipswich on Monday, and when he [came] without the town towards Framlingham, he had all his men ride forth afore a great pace, for he would follow softly, and when his men were out of sight, he rode with five men to an Esquier's place of his thereby, and on Tuesday rode my lady to him; and so I did nought at Framlingham. No more at this time, but Almighty Jesu speed you, and have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the Thursday next after Saint Austin, &c. (*May* 26).

By your Servant,

JOHN OSBERN.

30. SIR T. TUDDENHAM ACCUSES MEN FALSELY (Feb., 1451)

To my right worshipful Husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that there is a great noise in this town, that my Lord of Oxford and Yelverton and ye be endited in Kent for maintaining of the[1] Oyer and Determiner, and John Damme is indited there also of treason, because that he did Heydon inditen of treason for taking down of the quarter of the man; and the people that be against Sir Thomas Todenham and Heydon be sore afraid because of this noise, and of other language that is had both in this town and in the country, that these said Todenham and Heydon should be as well at ease, and have as great rule as ever they had.

James Gloys telleth me, that he hath sent you word of Heydon's horse and of other things, more of which I was purposed to a' sent you word of. The holy Trinity

[1] A Commission of Oyer and Terminer is the largest of the five Commissions by which the Judges of Assize sat in their several Circuits. It was wont to be only in use upon some sudden outrage or insurrection in any place. (F.)

have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, the Wednesday next after Saint Mathias (*Feb.* 24).

Yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

31. EARL OF WARWICK SOUNDS TUDDENHAM

To our right trusty, and well beloved Friend, Sir Thomas Todenham.

RIGHT truly and well beloved Friend, we greet you well, heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which we pray God preserve to your heart's desire; and if it please you to hear of our welfare, we were in good health at the making of this Letter, praying you heartily that ye will consider our message, which our Chaplain Master Robert Hopton shall inform you of; for as God knoweth we have great business daily, and have had here before this time, wherefore we pray you to consider the Purchase [1] that we have made with one John Southcote, an Esquire of Lincolnshire, of 88*l.* by the year, where upon we must pay the last payment the Monday next after St. Martin's day (11*th of November*), which sum is 458*l.* wherefore we pray you with all our heart, that ye will lend us ten or twenty pounds, or what the said Master Robert wants of his payment, as we may do for you in time for to come, and we shall send it you again afore New Year's day with the grace of God, as we are a true Knight.

For there is none in your Country, that we might write to for trust, so well as unto you, for as we be informed, ye be our well willer, and so we pray you of good continuance.

Wherefore we pray you, that ye consider our intent of this money, as we will that we do for you in time to come, as God knoweth, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, on All Soul's day, within our Lodging in the Grey Friars, within Newgate (*2nd Nov.*).

RICHARD, EARL OF WARWICK.

[1] Of an estate worth £88 annually.

32. Incident of the Tailboys and Cromwell Feud

[See note on p. 34 and Appendix I.]

To my right honourable and right worshipful Lord, Viscount Beaumount.

Right honourable and my right worshipful Lord, I recommend me unto your good Lordship with all my service, ever more desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, the which I pray God encrease and continue to his pleasure, and after your own heart's desire; and thanking you of the good Lordship that ye have shewed me at all times, beseeching you alway of good continuance.

Please it your good Lordship to be remembered how afore this time Hugh Wytham hath said he would be in rest and peace with me, and not to malign against me, otherwise than law and right would. That notwithstanding, upon Monday last past, he and three men with him came into a servant's house of mine in Boston, called William Sheriff, and there as he sat at his work struck him upon the head, and in the body with a dagger, and wounded him sore, and pulled him out of his house, and set him in prison without any cause reasonable, or without writ, or any other process shewed unto him; and that me seems longs not for him to do, but as he says he is indicted, and as your good Lordship knows well, I and all my servants are in like wise, but and any man should have done it, it longs either to the Sheriff or to your Bailiff, as I conceive, and other cause he had none to him as far as I can know, but only for the maliciousness of that he hath unto me, nor I can think none other but it is so. And now, yester night my Lord Welles came to Boston with four score horses, and in the morning following, took him out of prison, saying afore all people, "False thief thou shalt be hanged, and as many of thy master's men as may be gotten," as your servant John Abbot can report unto your good Lordship, and hath taken him away with him to Tattershall, what to do with him I

cannot say, but as I suppose to have him to Lincoln Castle; wherefore I beseech your Lordship in this matter to be my good Lord, and that it please your good Lordship to write a Letter to the keeper of the Castle of Lincoln, that it liked him to deliver him out of prison under a sufficient surety had for him, for and they may keep him still by this mean they may take all the servants that I have, and so I may do again in like wise.

And also, as I am informed, without he be had out of prison in haste, it will be right grievous to him to heal of his hurt, he is so sore stricken; and if there be any service that your good Lordship will command me to do in any country, please it you to send me word, and it shall be done to my power with the grace of God, which have you my right honourable and worshipful Lord alway in his blessed keeping. Written at Kyme, upon Wednesday next after our Lady's day, the Assumption, (15*th August*).

Also, please it your good Lordship to weet after this Letter was made there came a man from Tattershall, unto my fen, which ought me good will, and because he would not be holden suspect, he spake with women which were milking kyne, and bad them go to a Priest of mine to Dokdyke, and bid him fast go give me warning, how that my Lord Willoughby, my Lord Cromwell, and my Lord Welles proposed then to set a Sessions, and hang the said William Sheriff, and they might bring the intent about; and so, as I and your servant John Abbot stood together, the Priest came and gave me warning hereof, which I trust for my worship your good Lordship would not should happen, for it were to me the greatest shame that might fall, but and it please your good Lordship to write to all your servants in this country, that they will be ready upon a day's warning to come when I send them word; I trust to God they shall not hang him against the law, but I, with help of your good Lordship, shall be able to let it.

By your Servant,

WILLIAM TAILBOYS.

33. The Duke of York. A Hue and Cry against Maintainers (1450)

To my Master, John Paston, in right great haste.

Sir, and it please, I was in my Lord of York's house, and I heard much thing more than my master[1] writeth unto you of; I heard much thing in Fleet-street; but, Sir, my Lord was with the King, and he visaged so the matter that all the King's household was, and is, afraid right sore, and my said Lord[2] hath put a bill to the King, and desired much thing, which is much after the Commons desire, and all is upon justice, and to put all those that be indicted under arrest, without surety or mainprise, and to be tried by law as law will, insomuch that on Monday Sir William Oldhall was with the King at Westminster more than two hours, and had of the King good cheer; and the King desired of Sir William Oldhall that he should speak to his cousin York, that he would be good Lord to John Penycock,[3] and that my Lord of York should write unto his tenants that they should suffer Penycock's officers go and gather up his rent farms within the said Duke's Lordships; and Sir William Oldhall answered again to the King, and prayed him to hold my Lord excused, for though my Lord wrote under his Seal of his Arms his tenants will not obey it, insomuch [that] when Sir Thomas Hoo met with my Lord of York beyond Saint Alban's the Western men[4] fell upon him and would have slain him, had [not] Sir William Oldhall been, and therefore would the Western men have fallen upon the said Sir William, and have killed him, and so he told the King.

Sir Borle Yonge and Josse labour sore for Heydon and Todenham to Sir William Oldhall, and proffer more than two thousand pounds for to have his good Lordship, and therefore it is none other remedy but let Swaffham men be warned to meet with my said Lord on Friday next, coming to Pickenham on horseback in the most

[1] Judge Yelverton. [2] Richard, Duke of York. [3] A follower of Suffolk. [4] York's retainers from the Welsh marches.

goodly wise, and put some bill unto my Lord of Sir Thomas Todenham, Heydon, and Prentice, and cry out on them, and that all the women of the same town be there also, and cry out on them also, and call them Extortioners, and pray my Lord that he will do sharp execution upon them. And my Master counsel you that ye should move the Mayer and all the Aldermen with all their Commoners [of Norwich] to ride against (*to meet*) my Lord, and that there be made bills, and put them up to my Lord, and let all the town cry out on Heydon, Todenham, Windham and Prentice, and of all their false maintainers, and tell my Lord how much hurt they have done to the City, [Norwich] and let it be done in the most lamentable wise, for Sir but if my Lord hear some foul tales of them, and some hideous noise and cry, by my faith they are else like to come to grace, and therefore Sir remember you of all these matters.

Sir, also I speak with William Norwich, and asked him after the Lord Molyns, how he stood to my Lordward, and he told me he was sore out of grace, and that my Lord of York loveth him nought; William Norwich told me that he durst undertake for to bring you unto my Lord, and make him your right good Lord; and, Sir, my master counselled you that ye should not spare, but get you his good Lordship.

Sir beware of Heydon for he would [have] destroyed you by my faith.

The Lord Scales and Sir William Oldhall are made friends.

Sir, labour ye for [to] be Knight of the shire, and speak to my master Stapleton also that he be it; Sir, all Swaffham, and they be warned, will give you their voices; Sir, speak with Thomas Denys and take his good advice therein; Sir, speak to Denys that he avoid his Garrison at Reydon, for there is none other remedy but death for Daniel, and for all those that are indicted; Sir, labour ye to the Mayor that John Dam or William Jenney be Burgess for the City of Norwich, tell them that he may be it as well as Yonge is of Bristol; or the Recorder is of London; and as the Recorder of Coventry

is for the city of Coventry; and it [is] so in many places in England. Also, Sir, think on Yarmouth, that ye ordain that John Jenney, or Lomnor, or some good man be Burgess for Yarmouth; ordain ye that Jenneys may be in the parliament for they can say well.

Sir, it were wisdom that my Lord of Oxford wait on my Lord of York; in good faith, good Sir, think on all these matters; much more I had to write unto you, if I could have remembered me, but I had no leisure by my faith, hold me excused of my lewd rude writing; let John Dam beware for the Lord Molyns; and, Sir, let the City beware for he will do them a villainy, but if he may have his men; and Sir, if he come to Norwich, look there be ready to wait upon the Mayor a good fellowship,[1] for it is said here that they are but Beasts.

Sir, my Master bade me write unto you that ye should stir the Mayor and all the Aldermen to cry on my Lord that they may have justice of these men that be indicted, and that my Lord will speak unto the King thereof; and Sir, in divers parts in the town there (*where*) my Lord cometh, there would be ordained many parties of Commoners to cry on my Lord for justice of these men that are indicted, and tell their names, in special Todenham, Heydon, Windham, Prentice. Sir, I send you a copy of the bill that my Lord of York put unto the King, and Sir, let copies go about the city enough, for the love of God, which have you in his keeping. Written on Saint Faith's day in haste (6 *October*).

By your Servant,
WILLIAM WAYTE.

34. RICHARD DUKE OF YORK'S PETITION TO KING HENRY FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF TRAITORS, &c. (1450)

PLEASE it, your Highness, tenderly to consider the great grudging and Rumour that is universally in this your Realm, of that Justice is not duly ministered to such as

[1] A good guard for the Mayor.

trespass, and offend against your laws; and in special of them, that been endited of Treason, and others, being openly noised of the same; wherefore, for great inconvenience that have fallen, and great is like to fall hereafter, in your said Realm, which God defend, but if by your Highness provision convenable be made for due reformation and punishment in this behalf; Wherefore I, your humble Subject and Liege man, Richard Duke of York, willing as effectually as I can and desiring surety and prosperity of your most royal person and welfare of this your noble Realm, counsel and advertise your excellence, for the conservation of good tranquillity and peaceable rule among all true subjects, for to ordain and provide, that due Justice be had against all such that [have] been so endited, or openly so noised; Wherein I offer, and will put [me] in Devour for to execute your commandments in these premises of such offenders, and redress of the said misrulers to my might and power. And for the hasty execution hereof, like it your Highness to [address] your Letters of Privy seal and Writs, to your officers and ministers, to do take, and arrest all such persons so noised or endited, of what estate, degree, or condition so ever they be, and them to commit to your Tower of London, or to other your Prisons, there to abide without bail or mainprise unto the time that they be utterly tryed, and declared after the course of your Law.

35. Proclamation in Norfolk (1452)

[*by*] *The Duke of Norfolk.*

Be it known to all the King's true liege people, the cause of our coming into this country is, by the commandment of the King our sovereign lord, for to enquire of such great riots, extortions, horrible wrongs, and hurts, as his highness is credibly informed be done in this country, and to know in certain, by you that know the truth, by what person or persons the said great riots, extortions, horrible wrongs, and hurts be done; wherefore we charge you all, on the king's behalf our

sovereign lord, that ye spare neither for love, dread, nor fear that ye have to any person of what estate, degree, or condition he be, but that ye say the sooth by whom such offences be done, and that ye spare no man that ye know guilty, and, by the faith that we owe to our sovereign lord, they shall be chastised after their desert, and it reformed as law requireth.

Also it is openly published that certain servants of the Lord Scales should in his name menace and put men in fear and dread to complain to us at this time of the said hurts and griefs, saying that we would abide but a short time here, and after our departing he would have the rule and governance as he hath had afore time. We let you weet that next the king, our sovereign lord, by his good grace and licence, we will have the principal rule and governance through all this shire, of which we bear our name, while that we be living, as far as reason and law requireth, whosoever will grudge or say the contrary; for we will that the Lord Scales, Sir Thomas Todenham, Sir Miles Stapylton, and John Heydon have in knowledge, though our person be not daily here, they shall find our power here at all times to do the King our sovereign lord service, and to support and maintain you all in your right that be the King's true liege men; for it may not be said nay, but that here hath been the greatest riots, horrible wrongs, and offences done in these parts by the said Lord Scales, Thomas Todenham, Miles Stapylton, John Heydon, and such as be confederated unto them, that ever was seen in our days; and most mischief, through their malicious purpose, like to have fallen among the King's true liege people now late at Norwich, had we not better provided therefore; and also that God fortuned us to withstand their said malicious and evil disposed purpose.

Wherefore make bills of your grievances and come to us, and we shall bring you to the King's presence ourself, whose presence will be here in all the haste with the mercy of God, and see the reformation there of his own person.

NOTE ON LORD CROMWELL

Lord Cromwell and his friends, the Lords Welles and Willoughby, opposed Suffolk fiercely.

Sir Thos. Daniel, an early patron of the Pastons, was another personal attendant of the King of whom Suffolk was jealous.

Lord Moleyns, Viscount Beaumont (High Constable, *k.* at Northampton, 1460), Tailboys, and Lord Scales were vigorous supporters of Suffolk, and Scales "maintained" Sir Thomas Tuddenham and John Heydon, the Pastons' enemies, and great fomenters of violence in Norfolk.

Cromwell's hatred of Suffolk, whose impeachment he, chiefly, procured, and his other feuds (against Tailboys and the Nevilles) were among the immediate causes of the Civil War. Warwick accused him of bringing about the fight at St. Albans, from which he was himself conspicuously absent, as from that at Stamford Bridge.

PART III

PUBLIC EVENTS (A) TO THE OUTBREAK OF CIVIL WAR (1440-1456)

SUMMARY OF POLITICAL EVENTS (1440–1458)

1440. Thoughts of Peace, Orleans released to negotiate.
1442. Courtney and Bonvile feud begins.
1445. Henry VI. marries Margaret of Anjou. Suffolk principal minister.
1447. Arrest and death of Gloucester, York heir presumptive.
1448. Anjou and Maine relinquished.
1449. French retake Normandy. Winnington, sent to suppress piracy, takes the Hanse fleet.
1450. Bishops Moleyns and Ayscough murdered. Suffolk impeached, pardoned, banished, and murdered.
Rebellion of Cade.
York comes home from Ireland, Somerset minister.
1452. York in arms to force Somerset's dismissal, he fails.
1453. Defeat of Talbot and last English army in France. Henry VI. becomes imbecile. Birth of P. Edward. Nevilles and York arm and imprison Somerset.
1454. York Protector.
1455. Henry VI. recovers, Somerset returns, battle of St. Albans, Y. victory. Henry ill.
1456. York in power, Henry recovers.
1457. Ruin of Bishop Pecock.
1458. Formal reconciliation of Enemies.

PART III

36. Release of the Duke of Orleans (1440)

To my right reverend, and right honourable Master, John Paston, be this given.

Salvete, &c. Tidings, the Duke of Orleans,[1] hath made his oath upon the sacrament, and used it, never for to bear arms against England, in the presence of the King, and all the Lords, except my Lord of Gloucester; and in proving my said Lord of Gloucester agreed never to his deliverance, when the Mass began, he took his barge, &c.

God give grace the said Lord of Orleans be true, for this same week shall he towards France.

Also Frenchmen and Picards a great number came to Arfleet (Harfleur), for to have rescued it; and our Lords with their small puissance manly beat them, and put them to flight, and blessed be our Lord, have taken the said City of Arfleet; the which is a great Jewel to all England, and especially to our Country [Norfolk].

Moreover there is one come into England, a Knight out of Spain, with a Kerchief of Plesaunce [2] enwrapped about his arm; the which Knight will run a Course with a sharp spear for his Sovereign Lady's sake, whom, either Sir Richard Wodvile, or Sir Christopher Talbot, shall deliver [3] to the worship of England, and of themselves by God's grace.

[1] The Duke, a prisoner of Henry V., was at length released by the peace party, in hopes that he would negotiate a Peace between Henry VI. and Charles VII., which he did not do.

[2] A rich scarf, bestowed as a token by his "sovereign lady."

[3] From his vow, by jousting with him

Farthermore ye be remembered, that an Esquire of Suffolk, called John Lyston recovered in assize of novel disseisin, seven hundred marks (466*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in Damages against Sir Robert Wingfield, &c. In avoiding of the payment of the said 700 marks, the said Sir Robert Wingfield subtlely hath outlawed the said John Lyston in Nottinghamshire, by the virtue of which Outlawry, all manner of chattel to the said John Lyston appertaining are accrued unto the king, &c. And anon as the said Outlawry was certified, my Lord Treasurer granted the said 700 marks to my Lord of Norfolk, for the arrears of his sowde (*pay*) whilst he was in Scotland. And according to this assignment aforesaid, Tallies [were] delivered &c. And my lord of Norfolk hath released the same 700 marks to Sir Robert Wingfield.

And here is great heaving and shoving by my Lord of Suffolk and all his Counsel, for to espy how this matter came about, &c. Sir, I beseech [you] recommend me unto my Mistress your Mother, to my Mistress your Wife, and to my Mistress your Sister, et omnibus alijs quorum interest, &c.

Sir, I pray you, with all my heart, hold me excused, that I write thus homely and briefly unto you, for truly convenable space sufficed me not.

No more, at this time, but the Trinity have you in protection, &c. and when your leisure is, resort again unto your college, the Inner Temple, for there be many which sore desire your presence, Welles and others, &c.

Written on the Feast of All Saints, between Mass and Matins calamo sestinante, &c.

Yours, ROBERT REPPS.

37. FEUD OF THE STAFFORDS AND HARCOURTS (1448)

To my worshipful and reverend Lord, John Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT worshipful, and my reverend, and most special Lord, I recommend me unto your good Grace in the most humble and lowly wise, that I can or may, desiring

to hear of your prosperity and welfare, as to my most singular joy and special comfort.

And if it please your Highness, as touching the sudden adventure that fell lately at Coventry, please it your Lordship to hear, that on Corpus Christi [1] even last passed, between 8 and 9 of the clock at afternoon, Sir Humphrey Stafford had brought my master, Sir James of Ormond, toward his Inn from my Lady of Shrewsbury, and returned from him towards his Inn, he met with Sir Robert Harcourt coming from his mother's towards his Inn, and passed Sir Humphrey; and Richard his son came somewhat behind, and when they met together, they fell in hands together, (*began to fight*) and Sir Robert smote him a great stroke on the head with his sword, and Richard with his Dagger hastily went toward him, and as he stumbled, one of Harcourt's men smote him in the back with a knife; men wot not who it was readily; his Father heard noise, and rode toward them, and his men ran before him thitherward; and in the going down off his horse, one, he wot not who, behind him smote him on the head with an edged tool, men know not with us, with what weapon, that he fell down, and his Son fell down before him as good as dead; and all this was done, as men say, in a Pater noster while, (*a minute or two*).

And forthwith Sir Humphrey Stafford's men followed after, and slew two men of Harcourts, one Swynerton and Bradshawe, and more be hurt, some be gone, and some be in prison in the jail at Coventry.

And before the Coroner of Coventry, upon the sight of the Bodies, there be indited as Principals, for the death of Richard Stafford, Sir Robert Harcourt, and the two men that be dead; and for the two men of Harcourt's that be dead, there be indited two men of Sir Humphrey's as Principals; and as yet there hath been nothing found before the Justice of the peace of Coventry of this riot, because the Sheriff of Warwickshire is dead, and they may not sit unto the time there be a

[1] The Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

new Sheriff; and all this mischief fell because of an old debate that was between them, for taking of a Distress, as it is told.

And Almighty Jesu preserve your high Estate, my special Lord, and send you long Life and good health.

Written at Coventry on Tuesday next after Corpus Christi day, &c.

By your own poor Servant
JOHN NORTHWOOD.

38. WINNINGTON, SENT OUT AGAINST PIRATES, TAKES THE HANSE FLEET (1449)

To my reverend Master, Thomas Daniel, Esquire for the King's Body,[1] *be this Letter delivered in haste.*

MOST reverend Master, I recommend me unto your gracious Mastership, ever desiring to hear of your worshipful estate; the which Almighty God maintain it, and increase it unto his pleasance.

Pleasing you to know of my welfare, and of all your men, at the making of this Letter, we were in good health of body, blessed be God.

Moreover Master, I send you word by Rawly Pikering of all matters, the which I beseech you give him credence, as he will inform you of all, so sure I beseech you in the reverence of God, that ye will inform our Sovereign Lord the King of all matters, that I send you in this Letter; like as I have sent a Letter to my Lord Chancellor, and to all my Lords by the said Pickering; the which Letter, I beseech you that ye take and deliver to my Lord, and all my Lords by your own hands, and let the said Pickering declare all things as he hath seen and known.

First I send you word that when we went to sea, we took two Ships of Brest coming out of Flanders; and then after, there is made a great arming in Bretayne

[1] An Esquire of the King's Body was an Officer of great trust, lodged near him; during the night all messages, etc., were delivered by him in person to the King. Winnington was attached to the York party and therefore writes to Daniel, Suffolk's enemy.

to meet with me and my Fellowship, that is to say, the great Ship of Brest, the great Ship of Morlaix, the great Ship of Vannes, with other eight Ships, Barges, and Balingers to the number of 3000 men, and so we lay on the sea to meet with them.

And then we met with a Fleet of an hundred great Ships of Prusse, Lubeck, Campe,[1] Rostock, Holland, Zealand, and Flanders, betwixt Guernsey and Portland; and there I came aboard the Admiral, and bade them strike[2] in the King's name of England, and they bade me go skite in the King's name of England; and then I and my Fellowship said, but he will strike down the sail, that I will oversail them by the grace of God, and God will send me wind and weather; and they bade me do my worst, because I had so few Ships and so small, that they scorned me.

And as God would, on Friday last was, we had a good wind; and then we armed us to the number of 2000 men in my Fellowship, and made us ready for to oversail them; and then they launched a Boat, and set up a Standard of Truce, and came and spake with me, and there they were yielded, all the hundred Ships, to go with me into what Port that me list and my Fellows; but they fought with me the day before, and shot at us a 1000 Guns, and Quarrels out of number, and have slain many of my Fellowship, and maimed also.

Wherefore methinketh that they have forfeited both Ships and Goods at our sovereign Lord the King's Will.

Beseeching you that ye do your part in this matter, for this I have written to my Lord Chancellor, and all my Lord's of the King's Council; and so I have brought them, all the hundred Ships, within Wight (*into the Solent*) in spite of them all.

And ye might get leave of our sovereign Lord the King to come hither, it shall turn you to great worship, and profit, to help make our appointment in the King's name, for ye saw never such a sight of ships taken into

[1] Kampen on the Zuyder Zee.
[2] Lower the sail as a mark of deference

England this hundred winters; for we lie armed night and day to keep them in, to the time that we have Tidings of our Sovereign, and his Council; for truly they have done harm to me, and to my Fellowship, and to your Ships, more than 2000*l.* worth [of] harm.

And therefore I am advised, and all my Fellowship, to drown them and slay them, without that we have tidings from our Sovereign the King, and his Council; and therefore in the reverence of God come ye yourself, and ye shall have a great avail and worship, for your coming to see such a sight, for I dare well say, that I have here at this time, all the chief Ships of Dutchland (*Germany*), Holland, Zealand, and Flanders, and now it were time for to treat for a final Peace, as for these Parts.

I write no more to you at this time, but Almighty Jesu have [you] in his keeping.

I write in haste within Wight, on Sunday at night after the Ascension of our Lord.

By your own Servant,
ROBERT WENYNGTON.

39. SUFFOLK (IMPEACHED) IS PARDONED BY THE KING (1450)

To my right worshipful Master John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, &c. (*then follows some common business about his farms and tenants*).

William Rutt, the which is with Sir John Heveningham came home from London yesterday, and he said plainly to his master, and to many other Folks, that the Duke of Suffolk is pardoned, and hath his men again waiting upon him, and is right well at ease and merry, and is in the King's good grace, and in the good conceit of all the Lords, as well as ever he was.

There have been many Enemies against Yarmouth, and Cromer, and have done much harm, and taken

many English men, and put them in great distress, and greatly ransomed them; and the said Enemies have been so bold that they come up to the land and play them on Caister Sands and in other places, as homely as they were Englishmen; Folks be right sore afraid, that they will do much harm this Summer, but if there be made right great purveyance against them.

Other tidings know I none at this time; the blissful Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich, on Saint Gregory's day (12*th March*).

Yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

40. SUFFOLK'S FAREWELL TO HIS SON, ON HIS BANISHMENT (April, 1450)

The Copy of a notable Letter, written by the Duke of Suffolk to his Son, giving him therein very good Counsel.

MY Dear and only wellbeloved Son,[1] I beseech our Lord in Heaven, the Maker of all the World, to bless you, and to send you ever grace to love him, and to dread him, to the which, as far as a Father may charge his child, I both charge you, and pray you to set all your spirits and wits to do, and to know his Holy Laws and Commandments, by the which ye shall, with his great mercy, pass all the great tempests and troubles of this wretched world.

And that, also weetingly, ye do nothing for love nor dread of any earthly creature that should displease him. And there as any Frailty maketh you to fall, beseech his mercy soon to call you to him again with repentance, satisfaction, and contrition of your heart, never more in will to offend him.

Secondly, next him above all earthly things, to be true Liege man in heart, in will, in thought, in deed,

[1] John de la Pole, then a child. He is the Duke mentioned in the rest of these Letters. He turned Yorkist.

unto the King our alder-most high and dread Sovereign Lord, to whom both ye and I be so much bound to; Charging you, as Father can and may, rather to die than to be the contrary, or to know any thing that were against the welfare or prosperity of his most Royal Person, but that as far as your body and life may stretch, ye live and die to defend it, and to let his Highness have knowledge thereof in all the haste ye can.

Thirdly, in the same wise, I charge you, my dear Son, alway as ye be bounden by the Commandment of God to do, to love, to worship, your Lady and Mother; and also that ye obey alway her commandments, and to believe her counsels and advices in all your works, the which dread not but shall be best and truest to you.

And if any other body would steer you to the contrary, to flee the counsel in any wise, for ye shall find it nought and evil.

Furthermore, as far as Father may and can, I charge you in any wise to flee the Company and Counsel of proud men, of covetous men, and of flattering men, the more especially and mightily to withstand them, and not to draw nor to meddle with them, with all your might and power; and to draw to you and to your company good and vertuous men, and such as be of good conversation, and of truth, and by them shall ye never be deceived nor repent you of.

Moreover, never follow your own wit in no wise; but in all your works, of such Folks as I write of above, ask your advice and counsel, and doing thus, with the mercy of God, ye shall do right well, and live in right much worship, and great heart's rest and ease.

And I will be to you as good Lord and Father as my heart can think.

And last of all, as heartily and as lovingly as ever Father blessed his child in earth I give you the Blessing of Our Lord and of me, which of his infinite mercy increase you in all virtue and good living; and that your Blood may by his grace from kindred to kindred multiply in this earth to his service, in such wise as after the departing from this wretched world here, ye

and they may glorify him eternally amongst his Angels in heaven.

Written of mine hand,
The day of my departing from this Land.
Your true and loving Father,
SUFFOLK.

41. THE MURDER OF SUFFOLK (1450)

To the right worshipful John Paston, at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and am right sorry of that I shall say, and have so washed this little bill with sorrowful tears, that unethe (*scarcely*) ye shall read it.

As on Monday next after May day (*4th May*) there came Tidings to London, that on Thursday before (*30th April*) the Duke of Suffolk came unto the Coasts of Kent full near Dover with his two Ships and a little Spinner (*pinnace*); the which Spinner he sent with certain Letters, by certain of his trusted men unto Calais ward, to know how he should be received; and with him met a Ship called Nicholas of the Tower[1] with other Ships waiting on him, and by them that were in the Spinner, the Master of the Nicholas had knowledge of the Duke's coming.

When he espied the Duke's Ships, he sent forth his Boat to weet what they were, and the Duke himself spoke to them, and said, he was by the King's Commandment sent to Calais ward, &c. and they said, he must speak with their Master; and so he with two or three of his men went forth with them in their Boat to the Nicholas; and when he came, the Master bade him, Welcome Traitor, as men say.

And further the Master desired to wete if the Shipmen would hold with the Duke, and they sent word

[1] This Ship belonged to Bristol in 1442, 20 H. VI., and was a great Ship with Fore-Stages, and carried 150 men (F.). The Ships *of the Tower* belonged to the Crown, and must have been sent by some minister, *i.e.*, of York's party; there is some ground for supposing Winnington concerned in the matter.

they would not in no wise; and so he was in the Nicholas till Saturday (*2nd May*) next following.

Some say he wrote much thing to be delivered to the King, but that is not verily known.

He had his Confessor with him, &c. and some say, he was arraigned in the Ship on their manner upon the Impeachments and found guilty, &c.

Also he asked the name of the Ship, and when he knew it, he remembered Stacy[1] that said, if he might escape the danger of the Tower he should be safe, and then his heart failed him, for he thought he was deceived.

And in the sight of all his men, he was drawn out of the great Ship into the Boat, and there was an Axe, and a Stock, and one of the lewdest (*meanest*) of the Ship bade him lay down his head, and he should be fairly dealt with, and die on a Sword; and took a rusty Sword and smote off his head within half a dozen strokes, and took away his Gown of Russet, and his Doublet of velvet mailed, and laid his Body on the Sands of Dover; and some say his head was set on a pole by it; and his men set on the land by great circumstance (*formally*), and pray.

And the Sheriff of Kent doth watch the body, and [hath] sent his Undersheriff to the Judges to weet what to do; and also to the King [to know] what shall be done.

Further I wot not, but thus far is it, if the Process be erroneous let his Counsel reverse it, &c.

Also for all the other matters, they sleep and the Fryar also, &c. Sir Thomas Keriel is taken Prisoner and all the leg harness, and about 3000 Englishmen slain.

Matthew Gough with 1500 fled, and saved himself and them. And Peris Brusy was chief Captain and had 10,000 Frenchmen and more, &c.

I pray you let my Mistress your Mother know these tidings, and God have you all in his keeping.

I pray you this bill may recommend me to my Mistresses your Mother and wife, &c.

[1] A fortune-teller.

James Gresham hath written to John of Dam and recommendeth him, &c.

Written in great haste at London the 5th day of May, &c.

WILLIAM LOMNER.

42. AFFAIRS AFTER SUFFOLK'S DEATH (1450)

To my right worshipful Cousin, John Paston, of Norwich, Esquire.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you in the most goodly wise that I can; and for as much as ye desired of me to send you word of divers matters here, which have been opened in the Parliament openly, I send you of them such as I can.

First most especial, that for very truth upon Saturday that last was, the Duke of Suffolk was taken in the Sea, and there he was beheaded, and his body with the appurtenance set at land at Dover; and all the Folks that he had with him were set to land, and had none harm, &c.

Also the King hath somewhat granted to have the resumption again, in some but not in all, &c.

Also if ye purpose to come hither to put up your bills (*petitions*), ye may come now in a good time, for now every man that hath any, they put them in, and so may ye if ye come, with God's Grace to your pleasure.

Furthermore upon the 4th day of this Month, the Earl of Devonshire came hither with 300 men well beseen, &c. and upon the morrow after, my Lord of Warwick, with 400 and more, &c.

Also as it is noised here, Calais shall be besieged within this seven days, &c.

God save the King, and send us peace, &c.

Other tidings be there none here, but Almighty God have you in his keeping.

Written at Leicester, the 6th day of May.

Your Cousin,

JOHN CRANE.

43. Account of Jack Cade's Rebellion, in 1450

(Written in 1465 in hope of getting something from Paston, as Fastolfe's executor.)

To my right honourable Master, John Paston.

Right honourable and my right entirely beloved Master, I recommend me unto you, with all manner of due reverence in the most lowly wise as me ought to do, evermore desiring to hear of your worshipful state, prosperity and welfare; the which I beseech God, of his abundant grace, increase and maintain to his most pleasance, and to your heart's desire.

Pleaseth it your good and gracious Mastership tenderly to consider the great losses and hurts, that your poor Petitioner hath, and hath had ever since the Commons of Kent came to the Blackheath, and that is at 15 years passed; whereas my Master Sir John Fastolf knight, that is, your Testator, commanded your Beseecher to take a man, and two of the best horses that were in his stable with him, to ride to the Commons of Kent, to get the Articles that they come for; and so I did; and all so soon as I came to the Blackheath, the Captain [Cade] made the Commons to take me; and for the salvation of my Master's horses I made my Fellow to ride away with the two horses; and I was brought forthwith before the Captain of Kent; and the Captain demanded me, what was my cause of coming thither, and why that I made my Fellow to steal away with the horses; and I said, that I came thither to cheer with my wife's brethren, and others that were mine Allies, and Gossips of mine, that were present there; and then was there one there and said to the Captain that I was one of Sir John Fastolf's men, and the two horses were Sir John Fastolf's; and then the Captain let cry Treason upon me throughout all the field, and brought me at four parts of the field, with a Herald of the Duke of Exeter before me, in the Duke's Coat of Arms, making four Oyez at four parts of the field; proclaiming openly by the said

Herald that I was sent thither for to espy their puissance, and their habiliments of war, from the greatest Traitor that was in England or in France, as the said Captain made proclamation at that time, from one Sir John Fastolf knight, the which minished all the Garrisons of Normandy, and Le Mans, and Maine, the which was the cause of the losing of all the King's title and right of an heritance, that he had beyond sea. And moreover, he said, that the said Sir John Fastolf had furnished his Place with the old Soldiers of Normandy and habiliments of war, to destroy the Commons of Kent, when that they came to Southwark, and therefore he said plainly that I should lose my head; and so forthwith I was taken, and led to the Captain's Tent, and one axe and one block was brought forth to have smitten off mine head; and then my Master Poynyngs your brother [in law], with other of my Friends came, and letted (*prevented*) the Captain, and said plainly, that there should die an hundred or two, that in case be, that I died; and so by that mean my life was saved at that time.

And then I was sworn to the Captain, and to the Commons, that I should go to Southwark, and array me in the best wise that I could, and come again to them to help them; and so I got the Articles, and brought them to my Master, and that cost me more amongst the Commons that day than 27*s.*

Whereupon I came to my Master Fastolf, and brought him the Articles, and informed him of all the matter, and counselled him to put away all his habiliments of war, and the old Soldiers, and so he did, and went himself to the Tower, and all his meny (*troop*) with him, but Betts and Matthew Brayn; and had not I been [there] the Commons would have brenned his Place, and all his tenures; wherethrough it cost me of my own proper goods at that time more than six marks (4*l.*) in meat and drink, and (*yet*) notwithstanding the Captain that same time, let take me at the White Hart in Southwark, and there commanded Lovelace to despoil me out of mine array, and so he did; and there he took a fine

Gown of Muster' devillers [1] furred with fine beavers, and one pair of Brigandines covered with blue velvet and gilt nails, with leg-harness; the value of the Gown and the Brigandines 8*l.*

Item, the Captain sent certain of his meny to my Chamber in your rents, and there [they] broke up my Chest, and took away one Obligation of mine, that was due unto me of 36*l.* by a Priest of Paul's, and one other Obligation, of one knight of 10*l.* and my purse with five Rings of gold, and 17*s.* and 6*d.* of gold and silver; and one harness complete of the touch of Milan; and one Gown of fine Perse blue, furred with Martens; and two Gowns, one furred with Bogey, and one other lined with frieze; and there would have smitted off mine head, when that they had dispoiled me at [the] White Hart; and there my Master Poynyngs, and my Friends saved me, and so I was put up, till at night that the Battle was at London Bridge; and then at night the Captain put me out into the battle at the Bridge, and there I was wounded, and hurt near hand to death; and there was six hours in the battle, and might never come out thereof; and four times before that time, I was carried about throughout Kent and Sussex, and there they would have smitten off my head; and in Kent there as (*where*) my Wife dwelled, they took away all our Goods moveable that we had; and there would have hanged my Wife, and five of my Children, and left her no more goods but her Kirtle and her Smock; and anon after that Hurling (*Commotion*), the Bishop of Rochester impeached me to the Queen, and so I was arrested by the Queen's commandment into the Marshalsea, and there was in right great duress, and fear of mine life, and was threatened to have been hanged, drawn, and quartered; and so [they] would have made me [to] have impeached my Master Fastolf of Treason,[2] and because that I would not, they had me up to Westminster, and there would have sent me to the Gaol House at Windsor, but my

[1] See Glossary.

[2] Because Sir John left his House, etc., in Southwark, and retired to he Tower, instead of resisting and attacking the Rebels.

Wife's and one Cousin of mine own, that were Yeomen of the Crown, they went to the King, and got grace and one Charter of Pardon.

Per le vostre

J. PAYN.

44. THE ELECTIONS OF 1450

To our Well beloved John Paston.

RIGHT well beloved, I greet you well; and as touching for Tidings I can none, saving that my Lord of Norfolk met with my Lord of York at Bury on Thursday, and there were together till Friday 9 of the clock, and then they departed; and there a Gentleman of my Lord of York took unto a Yeoman of mine, John Deye, a Token and a Sedell (*Schedule*) of my Lord's intent, whom he would have Knights of the Shire, and I send you a Sedell closed (*Schedule enclosed*) of their names in this same Letter, wherefore me thinketh [it] well done to perform my Lord's intent, &c.

Written the 18th day of October at Winch.

OXENFORD.

County of Norfolk, { Sir WILLIAM CHAMBERLAYN. / HENRY GREY. }

The Names of the two Candidates to be elected are written on a Schedule, or strip of paper, which is fastened to the Original Letter by a piece of wax. (Fenn.)

45. THE PARLIAMENT OF 1450

To my worshipful and good Master, John Paston, Esquire.

PLEASE it you to weet that Sir William Oldhall is chosen Speaker of the Parliament, and admitted by the King, &c. Item, the day of oyer and terminer shall [be] holden at Norwich, on Monday next coming, and by that cause my Lord of Oxford shall be disported (*diverted*) of his

coming to the Parliament for to attend to the Sessions of oyer and terminer.

Item, the Lord Moleyns had language of you in the King's presence as my Master Yelverton can tell you by mouth. Your presence should have done much ease here in your own matters and others, as your well willers think, and your absence do none ease here; nevertheless my Master Yelverton shall tell you all, &c.

Item, it is said here that the Duke of York, and the Duke of Norfolk shall not come here this sev'night.

Item, it is supposed that an oyer and determiner shall come hastily into Norwich: William Dynne abideth therefore.

As touching Sheriffs there are none chosen or named, and as men suppose, none shall be chosen till my Lord of York's coming, &c. Written in haste at Westminster Mercurij in sesto Sancti Martini (11*th Nov.*).

Yours,

JOHN DAMME, and GRESHAM.

It is appointed that who [ever] shall sue any bill in the parliament they must be put into the Commons house before Saint Edmund's day (20*th of November*) at farthest, &c.

The Sessions of Oyer and Terminer here mentioned were to try those who had been concerned in Cade's Rebellion. (Fenn.)

46. A FACETIOUS ACCOUNT OF POLITICS (Jan., 1451)

To William Wayte.

RIGHT faithful and wellbeloved brother William Wayte, I commend me to you, as the Lord may to his tenant, praying you effectually to recommend me to my singular good master[1] and yours, excusing me that I write not to him, for I dare not involve me in the same; And as for tidings here, I certify you that all is nought,

[1] Sir John Fastolfe: Wayte and Bocking were his servants. The address is jocular.

or will be nought; the King [Henry VI] borroweth his expences for Christmas; the King of Arragon, the Duke of Milan, the Duke of Ostrich (*Austria*), the Duke of Burgoyn (*Burgundy*) would have been assistant to us to make a conquest,[1] and nothing is answered nor agreed in manner, save abiding the great deliberation that at the last shall spill all together, &c. (*except in debating solemnly and doing nothing*).

The Chief Justice[2] hath waited (*expected*) to have been assaulted all this sev'night nightly in his house, but nothing come as yet, the more pity, &c. An Oyer and Determiner goeth into Kent, and Commissioners my Lord the Duke of York, Bourchier, my master (that will not come there) *de proditionibus*, &c. (*for treasons*), but Kent prayeth them to hang no men when they come.[3]

Other tidings as yet can I none tell you, save Ulveston is Steward of the Middle Inn, and Isley of the Inner Inn, because they would have offices for excuse for dwelling this time from their wives, &c. Sir Thomas Todenham lost his Primer at the Tower-hill, and sent his man to seek it, and a good fellow wished it in Norfolk, so he would fetch it there, &c. Men ween that Norfolk men were hardier than they be.[4] God grant, and, at the reverence of God, help too that an outas (*outcry*) and clamour be made upon the Lord Scales, praying him, for weal of the country, neither sustain nor help him [Tuddenham] nor Heydon in no wise, and that ye cry upon my master and yours that he obey not the *Certiorari* as yet, as you may see by his letter from my master, rudely and in haste by me endited, of which I pray excuse, &c. And pray Blake to do Swaffham men say somewhat to the matter. I weet well Todenham and Heydon will not come there

[1] *I.e.*, in France. This is one of the grandiose ideas of the age of which came nothing.

[2] Fortescue.

[3] *I.e.*, the assize would be a farce.

[4] *I.e.*, wished Tuddenham and his primer both in Norfolk: people think Norfolk men would not have put up with Tuddenham in the old times.

at this time, as it is verily reported, &c. "Mitte sapientem, &c." Brayn and I shall be with you on Sunday next at even with the grace of Jesu, to whom I betake you. In haste at London the 2nd day of January.

By
J. BOCKING.

47. FASTOLFE'S CHAPLAIN DESCRIBES THE PARTIALITY OF THE ASSIZE IN NORFOLK (1451)

To my reverend and worshipful Master Sir John Fastolf, Knight, be this Letter delivered.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Master, I recommend me lowly unto you, please you to weet the Sunday, next after the feast of the Invention of the Cross,[1] the 9th day of May, at Caister, I received a letter from you by your clerk, W. Barker, the tenour whereof I shall do speed in all haste goodly; but for the more special cause of my writing at this time is to give you relation of the untrue demeaning this Oyer [and] Determiner, by the partiality of the Judges of it, for when the Counsel of the city of Norwich, of the town of Swaffham, yours, my. master Inglos, Paston's, and many others Plaintiffs, had put in and declared both by writing and by word before the Judges the lawful exceptions in many wise, the Judges by their wilfulness might not find in their heart to give not as much as a beck nor a twinkling of their eye toward, but took it to derision, God reform such partiality; and because Prisot[2] thought that if the Sessions of the Oyer and Determiner had been holden at Norwich, as they begun, he supposed it should not so fast pass to the intent of Todenham, and Heydon, and their Fellows, as it should do else in other place, but enjoined (*adjourned*) to Walsingham, where they have greatest rule, there to be holden on Tuesday 4th day of May.

[1] The third of May.
[2] C. J. Common Pleas. Yelverton was a Justice of King's Bench.

This knowing, my Master Yelverton, Jenney, and others might well conceive how the governance of the Oyer and Determiner should proceed, for it was the most partial place of all the shire, and thither were cleped all the friends, knights, and esquires, and other Gentlemen that would in no wise do otherwise than they would, and the said Todenham, Heydon, and other oppressors of their set, came down thither, as I understand, with 400 horse and more, and considering how their well willers were there assembled at their instance, it had been right jeopardous and fearful for any of the Plaintiffs to have been present, for there was not one of the Plaintiffs nor Complainants there, but your right faithful and truly well willer John Paston. And my master Yelverton said full discreetly, and controulled the said Prisot when he said, sitting in the Guildhall of Norwich, these words to the Mayor and the Commonalty.

"A, Sir Mayor and your Brethren, as to the process of your complaints we will put them in continuance (*put them off*), but in all other we will proceed," which words Yelverton thought right partial; and beside this the said Prisot would suffer no man that was learned to speak for the Plaintiffs, but took it as a venom, and took them by the nose at every third word, which might well be known for open partiality.

And as for the Lord Scales ye know well what he is towards you, and namely (*especially*) for Hickling matter. Also to know some of your faint friends, at the time that my Lord of Norfolk sat at Norwich upon the Oyer and Determiner, Sir John Hevingham might not find it in his heart to go four furlongs from his dwelling place to the shire house, but now he could ride from Norwich to Walsingham to sit as one of the Commissioners; as to the rule of others, that ye would have supposed your well willers, how they have behaved at Walsingham I shall send you word in all haste when Berney come home to Caister, for he is not yet come from Walsingham, but this I know well, that they found none obstacle nor impediment in their conscience in all your

matter, but how they have done with Norwich, Swaffham, and Paston, I am not yet clearly informed, I suppose they are put in respite (*put off*); I hear say, Heydon sueth for an end to be had with the City of Norwich; and as to the names of them that passed on their acquittal against you, Broyn can well inform you, I understand that Sir Robert Conyers, Calthorp, Mundford were Captains, and Mastor Richard Doget also.

Item, as for the two "Venire Facias," ye sent to be returned for your Manors of Bradwell and Beyton, I have done them to be returned of such names as I have sent word before, saving some be taken and excepted out. Moreover, as for the matter of Sir John Sybton; Geney and Rawlins give full counsel that it should abide till the matter of Bradwell might proceed, so that both matters might take upon a day, for they say it will draw 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to labour the Jury (*get them to go*) to London, and yet it were hard to bring about; and they give you counsel in all wise, that ye labour to have Yelverton Judge at that time, and in all wise, both in that matter and in all others, that ye be ware that Prisot have not to have do in any wise, for then all will be nought. Of all other matters I shall send you word in all haste goodly, for at this time I had no leisure because of the hasty coming up of Hugh Fenn, whom I beseech you to feel of the demeaning of the Oyer and Determiner, for he can tell you much and he will, whether he will or nay, I cannot say; for I know well he was at Walsingham. And I beseech Almighty Jesu have you in his merciful governance.

Written at Caister the Sunday 9th day of May, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

On the back of the Letter is written,

I pray you be not displeased though I have not subscribed my name within forth, for it is of negligence saith Howys, Parson of Castlecomb.

48. Queen Margaret at Norwich (1453)

To my right worshipful Master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet, &c. (*here follows some account of money received, &c.*).

As for tidings, the Queen came into this town on Tuesday last past after noon, and abode here till it was Thursday three [o'clock] afternoon; and she sent after my Cousin Elizabeth Clere,[1] by Sharinborn, to come to her; and she durst not disobey her commandment, and came to her; and when she came in the Queen's Presence, the Queen made right much of her, and desired her to have an husband, the which ye shall know of hereafter; but as for that, he is never nearer than he was before; the Queen was right well pleased with her answer, and reporteth of her in the best wise, and saith, by her truth, she saw no Gentlewoman since she came into Norfolk, that she liked better than she doth her.

Blake, the Bailey of Swaffham, was here with the King's Brother, and he came to me, weening that ye had been at home; and said, that the King's brother[2] desired him that he should pray you in his name to come to him, for he would right fain that ye had come to him, if ye had been at home; and he told me, that he wist well that he should send for you, when he came to London, both for Cossey and other things.

I pray you that ye will do your cost on me against Whitsuntide, that I may have something for my neck; when the Queen was here, I borrowed by Cousin Elizabeth Clere's Device, for I durst not for shame go with my Beads amongst so many fresh Gentlewomen as here were at that time.

[1] The wealthy widow of Robert Clere of Ormsby. See Appendix II. (5).

[2] Either Edmund or Jasper Tudor.

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich on the Friday next before Saint George (*23rd April*).

By yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

49. YORK IN POWER. PASTON FLATTERED (1454)

To his worshipful Brother John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Brother, I recommend [me] to you; and as for tidings, my Lord of York hath taken my Lord of Exeter into his award; the Duke of Somerset is still in prison, in worse case than he was.[1]

Sir John Fastolf recommends him to you, &c., he will ride into Norfolk ward as on Thursday, and he will dwell at Caister, and Scroop with him; he saith ye are the heartiest Kinsman and Friend that he knoweth, he would have you at Mautby dwelling.

I had great cheer of Billing by the way, and he told me, in counsel, what he said to Ledam [Robert Lethum].

Ledam would have done his wise to have made a complaint to Prisot in the Shire house of you, and Billing counselled him to leave, and told Ledam, ye and he were no Fellows, and said to Ledam "it is the guise of your Country men to spend all the Goods they have on men and livery Gowns, and Horse and Harness, and bear it out for a while, and at the last they are but Beggars; and so will ye do, I would ye should do well, because ye are a Fellow of Gray's Inn, where I was a Fellow.

"As for Paston, he is an Esquire of Worship, and of great Livelihood, and I wot he will not spend all his Goods at once, but he spareth yearly an hundred marks or an hundred pounds; he may do his Enemy a shrewd turn and never fare the worse in his household, nor the less men about him.

"Ye may not do so but if it be for one season; I

[1] See Appendix I. Billing was a Serjeant-at-Law.

counsel you not to continue long as ye do. I would counsel you to seek rest with Paston."

And I thanked Billing on your behalf. God have you in his keeping.

By your poor Brother,
WILLIAM PASTON.

Much other thing I can tell you, and I had leisure; recommend me to my Sister Margaret, and my Cousin Elizabeth Clere, I pray you.

50. POLITICAL NEWS (June, 1454)

To my Master Paston.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my good Master, after due recommendation with all my true service preceding, like you weet, that as to Novelties, &c., the Prince[1] shall be created at Windsor upon Pentecost Sunday, the Chancellor, the Duke of Buckingham, and many other Lords of estate, present with the Queen.

As to my Lord [of] York, he abideth about York till Corpus Christi Feast be passed, and with great worship is there received.

And certain Justices, Prisot, Bingham, Portington, &c. be thither for execution of Justice upon such as have offended in causes criminal.

It is said, the Duke of Exeter is here covertly, God send him a good counsel hereafter.

And the Privy Seal is examined how, and in what manner, and by what Authority, privy Seals were passed forth in that behalf, which is full innocent and right clear in that matter, as it is well known.

The Frenchmen have been afore the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey and a great Navy of them, and 500 be taken and slain of them by men of the said true Isles, &c.

Sir Edmund Mulso is come from the Duke of Burgundy; and he saith, by his Servants' report, that

[1] Edward, infant son of Henry VI. and Margaret of Anjou, to be created Prince of Wales. York was Protector and Salisbury Chancellor.

he will not discharge the Goods of the Merchants of this land, but so be (*unless*) that Justice be done upon the Lord Bonville, or else that he be sent to him to do justice himself, as he hath deserved, or satisfaction be made to the value.

Your matter is ensealed as of the thing ye wot of.

I can no more for haste and lack of leisure, but our Lord keep you. Written hastily the 8th day of June.

I send a letter to Master Berney to let you see for the Governance in Yorkshire.

[1] BOTE H R. NER.

51. ORDERS FROM THE EARL OF WARWICK

To the worshipful, and my right trusty Friend, John Paston, Esquire.

WORSHIPFUL, and my right trusty and well beloved Friend, I greet you well, and forasmuch as I have purchased, of the worshipful and my well beloved friend, Priour of Walsingham, two Manors in Little Snoring with the Appurtenances in the County of Norfolk, which Manors be cleped Bowle's and Walcote's,—

I desire and heartily pray you, that ye will shew to me, and my Feoffees in my name, your good will and favour; so that I may by your Friendship the more peaceably enjoy my aforesaid purchase,

And moreover I pray you to give credence in this matter to my well beloved Chaplain Sir John Southwell, bearer of this my Letter,

And in the same matter to be my faithful Friend, as my great trust is in you; wherein ye shall do to me a singular pleasure, and cause me to be to you right good Lord, which sometime shall be to you available

[1] William Botener, otherwise Worcester, was an attendant on Sir John Fastolfe. He compiled a narrative of his times and other books.

He here signs his name in a very particular manner, inserting H R between *Bote* and *ner*.—Perhaps it is meant to show his loyalty to King Henry. (F.)

by the grace of God, who preserve you and send you welfare.

Given under my Signet at Middleham,[1] the 23rd day of August.

RICHARD, EARL OF WARWICK. } R. WARWICK.

52. THE KING RECOVERS (Jan., 1455)

To my well beloved Cousin John Paston, be this delivered.

RIGHT well beloved Cousin, I recommend me to you, letting you weet such tidings as we have.

Blessed be God! the King is well amended, and hath been since Christmas-day; and on Saint John's day, commanded his Almoner to ride to Canterbury with his offering, and commanded the Secretary to offer at Saint Edward's.

And on the Monday afternoon, the Queen came to him and brought my Lord Prince with her, and then he asked what the Prince's name was, and the Queen told him Edward; and then he held up his hands, and thanked God thereof.

And he said, he never knew him till that time; nor wist not what was said to him, nor wist not where he had been, whilst he hath been sick till now; and he asked who were Godfathers, and the Queen told him, and he was well apaid (*content*).

And she told him that the Cardinal[2] was dead; and he said, he knew never thereof till that time; and he said, one of the wisest Lords in this land was dead.

And my Lord of Winchester, and my Lord of Saint John's, were with him on the morrow after Twelfthday, and he speak to them as well as ever he did; and when they came out, they wept for joy.

[1] Middleham, Yorks, was a principal seat of the Nevilles.

[2] John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal, &c., died on the 22nd of March, 1453.

And he saith he is in Charity with all the world, and so he would all the Lords were.

And now he saith Matins of Our Lady, and Evensong, and heareth his Mass devoutly.

And Richard shall tell you more tidings by mouth.

I pray you recommend me to my Lady Morley and to Master Prior, and to my Lady Felbrigg, and to my Lady Heveningham, and to my Cousin your Mother, and to my Cousin your Wife.

Written at Greenwich, on Thursday after Twelfth-day.

By your Cousin,
EDMUND CLERE.[1]

53. MEMORIAL OF THE DUKE OF YORK AND THE EARLS OF SALISBURY AND WARWICK TO HENRY VI., WHICH THE DUKE OF SOMERSET PREVENTED THE KING FROM SEEING (21 May, 1455)

Vadatur J.P.

MOST Christian King, right high and mighty Prince, and our most redoubted Sovereign Lord, we recommend us as humbly as we suffice unto your high Excellence, where unto please it to weet that for so much as we hear and understand, to our greatest sorrow earthly, that our Enemies of approved experience, such as abide and keep themselves under the wing of your Majesty Royal, have thrown unto the same, right studiously and right fraudulently, many ambiguities and doubts of the faith, legiance, and duty, that, God knoweth, we bear unto your Highness, and have put them in as great devoir as they could to enstrange us from your most noble presence, and from the favour of your good grace; which good grace to us is, and ought to be, our singular and most desired joy and consolation. We at this time

[1] "Edmund of the King's house" had a place in the royal household, then resident at Greenwich. He was brother-in-law of "my cousin, Elizabeth Clere."

be coming with grace, as your true and humble liege men, toward your said high Excellence, to declare, and shew thereto at large, our said faith and legiance, intending, with the mercy of Jesu in the said coming, to put us in as diligent and hearty devoir and duty as any your liege men alive to that at (*which*) may advance or prefer the honour and welfare of the said Majesty Royal, and the surety of the said most notable Person, the which [we] beseech our blessed Creator to prosper [with] as great honour, joy, and felicity as ever had any Prince earthly, and to your said Highness so to take, accept, and repute us, and not to please to give trust or confidence unto the sinister, malicious, and fraudulent, labours and reports of our said enemies, unto (*until*) our coming to your said most noble presence, whereunto we beseech humbly that we may be admitted as your liege men, to the intent to shew us the same, whereof yesterday we wrote our Letters of our intent, to the right reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury,[1] your Chancellor of England, to be shewed to your said Highness, whereof, for so much as we be not ascertained whether our said intent be by his fatherhood shewed unto your said good grace or not; we send thereof unto this closed a Copy of our said Letters of our disposition towards your said high Excellence, and the honour and weal of the land, wherein we will persevere with the grace of our Lord.

54. The First Battle of St. Albans (25 May, 1455)

Unto my worshipful and well beloved Cousin, John Paston, be this Letter delivered in haste.

Right worshipful and entirely well beloved Sir, I recommend me unto you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare.

Furthermore letting you weet, as for such Tidings as we have here, these three Lords be dead, the Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland, and the Lord

[1] Thomas Bourchier. See Appendix I.

Clifford; and as for any other men of name, I know none, save only Cotton of Cambridgeshire.[1]

As for any other Lords, many of them be hurt, and as for Fylongley[2] he liveth, and fareth well, as far as I can enquire, &c.

And as for any great Multitude of people that there was, as we can tell, there was at most slain six score; and as for the Lords that were with the King, they and their men were pilled and spoiled out of all their Harness and Horses; and as for what Rule we shall have yet I weet not, save only there be made new certain Officers.

My Lord of York, Constable of England; my Lord of Warwick is made Captain of Calais; my Lord Bourchier is made Treasurer of England; and as yet other Tidings have I none.

And as for Our Sovereign Lord, thanked be God, he hath no great harm.

No more to you at this time, but I pray you send this Letter to my Mistress Paston, when ye have seen it; praying you to remember my Sister Margaret against the time that she shall be made a Nun.

Written at Lamehith (*Lambeth*) on Whitsunday, &c.

By your Cousin,

JOHN CRANE.

55. AFTER ST. ALBANS

To William Worcester[3] *be this Letter delivered in haste.*

SIR, I recommend me to you, and as for Tidings ye may inform mine Master, [Fastolfe] that for new there is none but that he hath knowledge of.

But that the King, the Queen and the Prince remove to Hertford tomorrow without fault; my Lord of York

[1] Vice-Chamberlain to Henry VI.

[2] A nephew of Fastolfe.

[3] He was a man of great application to Learning, versed in various Sciences, and indefatigable in the Studies of the Antiquities of this kingdom. (F.)

to the Friars at Ware; my Lord of Warwick to Hunsdon; the Earl of Salisbury to Rye; and there they shall abide to the time the Parliament begins.

The Duke of Buckingham is come in, and sworn that he shall be ruled, and draw the line with them; and thereto he and his Brothers (*the Bourchiers*) be bound by recognizance in notable sums to abide the same.

The Earl of Wiltshire[1] sent to the Lords, from a place of his called Petersfield, a Letter desiring to know if he should come, and abide about the King's Person as he did before, and if he should not, then that they would license him to go into Ireland, and live there upon his lands, &c.

And before this done, the Lords were advised to have made him to do as the Duke of Buckingham hath done and no more; but what that will fall now thereof, no man can tell as yet.

The Baron of Dudley is in the Tower, what shall come of him God wot.

The Earl of Dorset[2] is in ward with the Earl of Warwick.

It was said forsooth, that Harper and two other of the King's Chamber, were confederated to have sticked (*stabbed*) the Duke of York in the King's Chamber, but it was not so, for they have cleared them thereof.

But London upon the same tale [hath] arisen, and every man to harness on Corpus Christi even (*5th of June*) and much ado there was.

Sir William Oldhall abideth no longer in Sanctuary than the Chief Justice come; for at that time he shall go at large and sue all his matters himself, &c.

The Baron Dudley hath impeached many men; but what they be, as yet we cannot weet.

Sir Philip Wentworth was in the Field, and bore the King's Standard, and cast it down and fled; my Lord of Norfolk saith, he shall be hanged therefore, and so is he worthy; he is in Suffolk now, he dares not come about the King.

[1] See Appendix I. He fled disgracefully from St. Albans.
[2] Son of Somerset, afterwards Duke.

Edmund Stendal was with Wenlock there in the field and foully hurt.

Fylongley is at home at his own place with his wife, and shall do right well, but we have a great loss of his absence this term, for it will be long ere he come this term, I am afraid.

All the Lords that died at the Journey are buried at Saint Alban's.

Other things be none here, but ye shall see by Thomas Scales' Letter the rule of the Frenchmen, &c.

God speed us well in our matters this term, I pray to God, who have you in his keeping, &c.

W. B.[1]

56. Duke of Norfolk orders the Elections for the Shire (1455)

To our right trusty and well beloved John Paston, Esquire.

The Duchess of Norfolk.

Right trusty and welbeloved, we greet you heartily well; and for as much as it is thought right necessary for diverse causes, that my Lord have at this time in the parliament such persons as belong unto him, and be of his menial[2] Servants; wherein we conceive your good will and diligence shall be right expedient; we heartily desire and pray you, that at the contemplation of these Our Letters, as Our special trust is in you, ye will give and apply your voice unto our right welbeloved Cousin and Servants John Howard, and Sir Roger Chamberlayn, to be Knights of the Shire; exhorting all such others as by your wisdom shall now be behoveful, to the good exploit and conclusion of the same.

And in your faithful attendance, and true devoir in this part, ye shall do unto my Lord and Us a singular pleasure, and cause us hereafter to thank you therefore,

[1] William Barker, employed, like Fylongley, by Fastolfe, in law business.

[2] Of his meny, or retainers.

as ye shall hold you right well content and agreed with the grace of God, who have you ever in his keeping.

Written at Framlingham Castle, the 8th day of June.

57. Fainthearted attempts to have a Free Election (1455)

To my worshipful Master John Paston, Esquire.

My Master Paston, I recommend me to you, and where [as] ye should be informed that I should say to Howard that ye laboured to be Knight of the Shire, I said never so to him; I told my Lord of Norfolk at London that I laboured divers men for Sir Roger Chamberlayn, and they said to me they would have him, but not Howard, in as much as he had no livelihood in the shire nor conversement (*acquaintance*).[1] And I asked them whom they would have, and they said they would have you, and thus I told him, and he said unadvisedly, as he can do full well; I might not (*could not*) say ye laboured therefore, for I heard never say ye laboured therefore by the faith I owe to God.

As for this Writ of the Parliament for Norwich, I thank you that ye will labour therein; as for my Friends there, I trust right well all the Aldermen except Brown and such as be in his danger[2]; I pray you speak to Walter Jeffrey and Harry Wilton, and make them to labour to your intent. I pray you that if ye think that it will not be, that it like you to say, that you move it of yourself, and not by my desire.[3] Some men hold it right strange (*risky*) to be in this Parliament, and me thinketh they be wise men that so do. Written at Intwood,[4] on Saint John's day (*24th June*), in haste.

Your Servant,

John Jenny.

[1] The Howard estates lay in Suffolk. See Appendix II. (4).

[2] In his debt, and therefore at his mercy. Brown had just been Mayor.

[3] *I.e.*, that, if Paston thinks the election of Jenney for Norwich doubtful, he would pretend J. had not asked him to canvass for him.

[4] This Estate came afterwards by purchase to the Greshams, and here it was that, in 1549, Sir Thomas Gresham, Knight, founder of the Royal Exchange, entertained John Dudley, the great Earl of Warwick, when he

58. The Duke professes to allow a Free Election

To my worshipful Master John Paston, Esquire.

My worshipful Master, I recommend me to you, and I thank you that it pleaseth you to take such labour for me as ye do, my servant told me ye desired to know what my Lord of Norfolk said to me when I spake of you, and he said, in as much as Howard might not be, he would write a Letter to the Under Sheriff, that the Shire should have free Election, so that Sir Thomas Todenham were not, nor none that was toward the Duke of Suffolk; he said he knew ye were never to him ward; ye may send to the Under Sheriff, and see my Lord's Letter; Howard was as wode (*mad*) as a wild Bullock; God send him such worship as he deserveth; it is an evil precedent for the Shire that a strange man should be chosen,[1] and no worship to my Lord of York, nor to my Lord of Norfolk to write for him; for if the Gentlemen of the Shire will suffer such inconvenience, in good faith the Shire shall not be called of such worship as it hath been. Written at Intwood, the Wednesday next after Saint John, in haste.

Your Servant,
John Jenney.

59. Sequel of St. Albans (1455)

Unto my most faithful Brethren, John Bocking, and William Worcester, and to either of them.

Worshipful Sir, and my most heartily and best beloved Brother, I recommend me unto you in more

marched into Norfolk to attack Ket the rebel. It was afterwards sold to the Hobarts. (F.)

[1] John Howard, one of the Duke's men of business, had been much in France. The family were influential in Edwardian times, but the Norfolk estates went to the E. of Oxford, and Sir R. Howard held lands in Suffolk. John, his son, was granted the Mowbray lands by Edward IV. and created Lord Howard 1470, and Duke of Norfolk 1483. He was unpopular locally, but was elected in 1455. See Appendix II. (4).

lowly wise, than I can either think or write; and with all my service and true heart thank you of your gentle Letters, full brotherly written unto me at many times of old, and in especial of late time passed. And truly brother, I thank Almighty God of your welfare, of the which the Bearer of this my poor Letter certified me of, &c.

And Sir, as touching all manner of new Tidings, I know well ye are avarous (*desirous*); truly the day of making of this Letter, there were none new, but such [as] I heard of, ye shall be served withal.

As for the first, the King, Our Sovereign Lord, and all his true Lords stand in health of their bodies, but not all at Heart's ease, as we amongst others marvel.

Two days afore the writing of this Letter there was language between my Lords of Warwick and Cromwell afore the King; insomuch as the Lord Cromwell would have excused himself of all the stirring or moving of the male journey (*evil fight*) of St. Albans; of the which excuse making, my Lord Warwick had knowledge, and in haste was with the King, and swore by his Oath, that the Lord Cromwell said not truth, but that he was the Beginner of all that journey at St. Alban's;[1] and so between my said two Lords of Warwick and Cromwell there is at this day great grudging, insomuch as the Earl of Shrewsbury hath lodged him at the Hospital of St. James[2] beside the Mews[3] by the Lord Cromwell's desire, for his safe guard.

And also all my Lord of Warwick's men, my Lord of York's men, and also my Lord of Salisbury's men, go with harness, and in harness, with strange weapons, and have stuffed their Lords' Barges full of weapons, daily unto Westminster.

And the day of making of this Letter there was a Proclamation made in the Chancery on the King's behalf; that no man should neither bear weapon nor wear harness defensible, &c.

[1] Owing to his feud with Tailboys. See note, p. 34.
[2] Now St. James's Palace.
[3] A place for the keeping of hawks, now the Royal Stables. (F.) (1785).

Also the day afore the making of this Letter, there passed a Bill both by the Kings, Lords, and Commons, putting Thorp, Joseph, and my Lord of Somerset in all the default,[1] by the which Bill, all manner of actions that should grow to any person or persons, for any offences at that journey done, in any manner of wise should be extinct and void, affirming all things done there, well done; and nothing done there never after this time to be spoken of; to the which Bill many a man grudged full sore now it is passed.

And if I might be recommended, unto my special Master and yours, with all lowliness and true service, I beseech you heartily as I can.

And also to my Brethren Th. Upton, Lodowick of Pole, William Lincoln and John Marshall.

No more, but our Lord have you both in his perpetual keeping.

Written at London on Saint Margaret's Even (19 July) in haste; and after this is read and understood, I pray you burn or break (*tear*) it, for I am loth to write any thing of any Lord, but I must needs, there is nothing else to write. Amen.

Your own,
HENRY WINDSOR.

60. THE COURTNEY AND BONVILE FEUD (1455)

To my right worshipful Master, John Paston, at Norwich, be this delivered.

PLEASE it your Mastership to weet (*here follows an account of some Law business, &c.*).

Here be many marvellous tales of things that shall fall, this next month, as it is said; for it is talked, that one Doctor Grene a Priest, hath calculated and reporteth, that before St. Andrew's day next coming, shall be the

[1] Putting all the blame upon. Thorp had been Speaker, an opponent of the Duke of York. William Joseph was apparently a servant in the royal household.

greatest battle that was since the battle of Shrewsbury [1] and it shall fall between the Bishop's Inn of Salisbury and Westminster Bars ; and there shall die seven Lords, whereof three should be Bishops.

All this and much more is talked and reported, I trust to God it shall not fall so !

Also there is great variance between the Earl of Devonshire, and the Lord Bonvile,[2] as hath been many day, and much debate is like to grow thereby ; for on Thursday (23d of October) at night last passed, the Earl of Devonshire's Son [3] and Heir came, with sixty men of arms, to Radford's Place in Devonshire which was of counsel with my Lord Bonvile ; and they set an house on fire at Radford's gate, and cried and made a noise, as though they had been sorry for the fire ; and by that cause Radford's men set open the Gates and yede (*went*) out to see the fire ; and forthwith the Earl's Son aforesaid entered into the place, and entreated Radford [4] to come down of his Chamber to speak with them, promising him that he should no bodily harm have ; upon which promise he came down, and spoke with the said Earl's Son ; in the mean time his meny rob his chamber, and rifled his hutches (*coffers*), and trussed such as they could get together and carried it away on his own horses ; then the Earl's Son said : "Radford, thou must come to my Lord my Father." He said he would, and bade one of his men make ready his horse to ride with them ; which answered him, that all his horses were taken away ; then he said to the Earl's Son : "Sir, your men have robbed my Chamber, and they have mine horses, that I may not ride with you to my Lord your

[1] Fought in July, 1403, when the Percy rebellion was crushed by Henry IV.

[2] Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was beheaded by order of Edward IV. immediately after the battle of Towton, in 1461. William Bonvile was created Lord Bonvile, in 1449, and was beheaded, by order of Queen Margaret, after the battle at Barnard's Heath, near St Alban's, in February, 1460–1, though he had staid with Henry VI. on a promise of safety. (F.)

[3] Thomas Courtney, Son and Heir of Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was beheaded very soon after his Father, in 1461, by Edward.

[4] Nicholas Radford was an eminent Lawyer. (F.)

Father, wherefore I pray you, let me ride for I am old, and may not go" (*cannot walk*).

It was answered him again, that he should walk forth with them on his feet; and so he did till he was a flight shot or more from his place,[1] . . . and forthwith came nine men again upon him and smote him on the head and felled [him and] cut his throat.

This was told to my Lord Chancellor this forenoon. . . . [The King is] at Hertford, and some men are afraid that he is sick again, I pray God. . . . In haste at London on Saint Simon's day and Jude (28 *October*).

Your poor,
JAMES GRESHAM.[2]

61. THE LORDS ASSEMBLE IN LONDON WHERE THE KING DESIRES TO RECONCILE THEM (1458)

To my Right Worshipful Master, Sir John Fastolf.

RIGHT Worshipful Sir, and my right good Master, I recommend me to you in my full humble wife.

Please you to wete, as to Novelties here being, Christopher Barker writeth to you more along (*at large*).

The King came the last week to Westminster, and the Duke of York came to London with his own Household only, to the number of 140 Horse, as it is said; the Earl of Salisbury with 400 Horse in his Company, four score Knights and Squires.

The Duke of Somerset came to London [the] last day of January with 200 Horse, and lodgeth without Temple Bar.

And the Duke of Exeter shall be here this week with a great Fellowship and strong, as it is said.

The Earl of Warwick is not yet come, because the wind is not for him; and the Duke of Exeter taketh a

[1] Where the lines are supplied with Dots, the Original Letter is imperfect, from a part being decayed, and torn off. (F.)

[2] His Seal has on it a Grasshopper; a Deviee afterwards borne by Sir Thomas Gresham, the Founder of the Royal Exchange, the Vane on the top of which is a Grasshopper. (F.)

great displeasure that my Lord Warwick occupieth his office, and taketh the charge of the keeping of the Sea upon him.

Item, as for tidings of beyond Sea, I hear none certain, but that the French King should have married his Daughter to the King of Hungary, which had the discomfiture upon the Turks; and the said King is deceased within this six weeks, ere the Espousal was made, but he ordained ere he died that the French King's Daughter should be named Queen of Hungary during her life.

Right worshipful Sir, I beseech the blessed Trinity have you in his governance.

Written at London the first day of February, in the 36th year of King Henry VIth.

Moreover, please you to weet that William Canynges[1] the Merchant writeth an answer of your letter; I trust it shall be the better for your writing.

My Brother promised me a certain sum when I married, and I shall have it of my Sister if I may.

Your Humble Servant,
WILLIAM BOTONER, called WORCESTER.

[1] William Canynges, of Bristol and London, was grandson of the first William Canynges, cloth merchant and shipowner of Bristol (temp. Richard II.) and six times mayor of that city. He was extremely wealthy; Lord Mayor in 1441 and 1449. M.P. for Bristol, 1451 and 1455. He made use of royal favour and foreign diplomacy in his business. He was a Yorkist, and procured the ruin of Bishop Pecock. His half-brother and fellow member for Bristol (T. Young), first proposed, in 1451, the recognition of York as heir to Henry VI.

PART IV

THE TROUBLES OF ELIZABETH PASTON

PART IV

62. *To John Paston be this Letter delivered.*

SON, I greet you well, with God's blessing and mine, and I let you weet that my Cousin Clere writted to me that she spake with Scroope after that he had been with me at Norwich, and told her what cheer that I had made him; and he said to her he liked well by the cheer that I made him.

He had such words to my Cousin Clere, that, less than (*unless*) ye made him good cheer and gave him words of comfort at London, he would no more speak of the matter.

My Cousin Clere thinketh that it were a folly to forsake him less than ye know of one other as good or better; and I have assayed your Sister [Elizabeth Paston] and I found her never so willing to none as she is to him: if it be so that his land stand clear.

I sent you a Letter by Brawnton for silk, and for this matter before my Cousin Clere wrote to me, the which was written on the Wednesday next after Midsummer day.

Sir Harry Inglose is right busy about Scroope for one of his daughters.

I pray you forget not to bring me my money from Horwelberry, as ye come from London, either all or a great part; the due debt was at Christmas last past, nothing allowed, 7*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.* and at this Midsummer it is 5*l.* more; and though I allow him all his asking, it is but 1*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* less, but I am not so advised yet. As

for the Friar[1] he hath been at St. Benet's,[2] and at Norwich, and made great boast of the suit that he hath against me, and bought many boxes, to what intent I weet never; it is well done to beware at London, in dread if he bring any syse (*writ of Assize*) at Saint Margaret's (20th July) time.

I can no more, but Almighty God be our good Lord, who have you ever in keeping. Written at Oxnead in great haste, on the Saturday next after Midsummer.

By your Mother,
AGNES PASTON.

63. COUSIN ELIZABETH CLERE'S ADVICE.

To my Cousin John Paston be this Letter delivered.

TRUSTY and well beloved Cousin, I commend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare and good speed in your matters, the which I pray God send you to his plesaunce and to your heart's ease.

Cousin, I let you weet that Scroope hath been in this Country to see my Cousin your Sister, and he hath spoken with my Cousin your Mother, and she desireth of him that he should shew you the Indentures made between the Knight that hath his Daughter and him, whether that Scroope, if he were married and fortuned to have children, if those children should inherit his land, or his Daughter, the which is married.

Cousin, for this cause take good heed to his Indentures, for he is glad to show you them, or whom ye will assign with you; and he saith to me he is the last in the [en]tail of his livelihood, the which is 350 marks (234*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and better, as Watkin Shipdam saith, for he hath taken an account of his livelihood divers times; and Scroope saith to me if he be married and have a Son, an heir, his Daughter that is married shall have of his livelihood 50 marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and no more;

[1] Friar Hauteyn had a quarrel with Judge Paston and the Priory of Bromholm, and pretended a claim on Oxnead.

[2] Abbey of St. Benet at Holme. Writs were carried in special boxes.

and therefore, Cousin, me seemeth he were good for my Cousin your Sister without that ye might get her a better; and if ye can get a better I would advise you to labour it in as short time as ye may goodly, for she was never in so great sorrow as she is now a days, for she may not speak with no man, whosoever come, ne not may see nor speak with my man, nor with servants of her Mother's, but that she beareth her an hand (*wrongly accuses her*) otherwise than she meaneth; and she hath since Easter the most part been beaten once in the week or twice, and sometimes twice on a day, and her head broken in two or three places. Wherefore, Cousin, she hath sent to me by Friar Newton in great counsel, and prayeth me that I would send to you a Letter of her heaviness, and pray you to be her good brother, as her trust is in you; and she saith if ye may see by his Evidences that his children and hers may inherit, and she to have reasonable jointure, she hath heard so much of his birth and his conditions, that, and ye will, she will have him, whether that her mother will or will not, notwithstanding it is told her his person is simple, for she saith men shall have the more duty (*respect*) of her, if she rule her to him as she ought to do.

Cousin, it is told me there is a goodly man in your Inn, of the which the father died lately, and if ye think that he were better for her than Scroope, it would be laboured (*should be tried*), and give Scroope a goodly answer, that he be not put off till ye be sure of a better; for he said when he was with me but if he have some comfortable answer of you, he will no more labour in this matter, because he might not see my Cousin your Sister, and he saith, he might have seen her and she had been better than she is; and that causeth him to deem that her mother was not well willing; and so have I sent my Cousin your mother word; wherefore, Cousin, think on this matter, for sorrow often time causeth women to beset them otherwise than they should do, and if she were in that case, I wot well ye would be sorry: Cousin, I pray you burn this Letter, that your men nor none other men see it; for and my Cousin your Mother

knew that I had sent you this Letter, she should never love me. No more I write to you at this time, but Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written in haste, on Saint Peter's day, by candle light (29 *June*).

By your Cousin,
ELIZABETH CLERE.

64. ELIZABETH ANXIOUS (1452 or '54)

To my right worshipful husband John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that I spake yesterday with my sister, [Elizabeth Paston] and she told me that she was sorry that she might not speak with you ere ye yede (*went*); and she desired, if it pleased you, that ye should give the Gentleman, that ye know of, such language as he might feel by you, that ye will be well willing to the matter that ye know of; for she told me that he hath said before this time that he conceived that ye have set but little thereby; wherefore she prayeth you that ye will be her good brother, and that ye might have a full answer at this time whether it shall be yea or nay; for her mother hath said to her since that ye ridden hence, that she hath no fantasy therein, but that it shall come to a jape (*come to nothing*); and saith to her that there is good craft in daubing; and hath such language to her that she thinketh right strange, and so that she is right weary thereof; wherefore she desireth the rather to have a full conclusion therein. She saith her full trust is in you, and as ye do therein, she will agree her thereto.

Master Brackley[1] was here yesterday to have spoken with you; I spake with him, but he would not tell me what his errand was.

It is said here that the Sessions shall be at Thetford

[1] John Brackley, Master (of Arts), and afterwards D.D., a Brother of the Convent of Grey Friars at Norwich, a notable preacher.

on Saturday next coming, and there shall be my Lord of Norfolk and others with great people, as it is said.

Other tidings have we none yet, the blissful Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich on the Tuesday next before Candlemas. (*2nd of Feb.*)

I pray you that you will vouchsafe to remember to purvey a thing for my neck, and to do make my girdle.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

My Cousin Crane recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to remember her matter, &c. for she may not sleep on nights for him.

65. BUILDING AT MAUTBY (OR CAISTER). ELIZABETH STILL UNMARRIED.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare; Praying you to weet that Sir Thomas Howes hath purveyed four Dormants (*beams*) for the draught Chamber, and the Malthouse, and the Brewery, whereof he hath bought three, and the fourth, that shall be the longest and greatest of all, he shall have from Heylesdon, which he saith my master Fastolf shall give me, because my chamber shall be made therewith. As for laying of the said Dormants, they shall be laid this next week because of the Malthouse, and as for the remanant I trow it shall abide till ye come home, because I can neither be purveyed of posts, nor of boards, not yet.

I have taken the measure in the draught chamber, there as ye would your coffers and your Cowntewery[1] should be set for the while, and there is no space beside the bed, though the bed were removed to the door, for

[1] Countewery, his counter-board, with a device to help the reckoning of figures. A man's money-chest was usually in his bedroom.

to set both your Board and your Coffers there, and to have space to go and sit beside; wherefore I have purveyed that ye shall have the same draught chamber that ye had before, there as ye shall lye to yourself; and when your gear is removed out of your little house, the door shall be locked, and your bags laid in one of the great Coffers, so that they shall be safe, I trust.

Richard Charles and John Dow have fetched home the Child[1] from Rockland Tofts, and it is a pretty boy; and it is told me that Will is at Blickling with a poor man of the town; a young woman that was some time with Burton of this town sent me word thereof; I pray you send me word if ye will that anything that ye will be done to him ere ye come home. Richard Charles sendeth you word, that Willes hath been at him here, and offered him to make him estate in all things according to their indenture, and if he do the contrary ye shall soon have word.

My Mother prayeth you for to remember my Sister, and to do your part faithfully ere ye come home to help to get her a good marriage; it seemeth by my mother's language that she would never so fain to have be delivered of her as she will now.

I was told here that Knivet the heir is for to marry; both his wife and child be dead, and it was told here; wherefore she would that ye should enquire whether it be so or no, and what his livelihood is, and if ye think that it be for to do, to let him be spoken with thereof.

I pray you that ye be not strange (*chary*) of writing of Letters to me betwixt this and that ye come home, if I might I would have every day one from you. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on the Tuesday next after the Conversion [of] Saint Paul (25 *January*).

By yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

[1] Presumably Thomas Fastolfe of Cowhawe, a distant relative of Sir John Fastolfe. His wardship caused much quarrelling and litigation.

66. Trying for Sir William Oldhall

This Letter be delivered to John Paston dwelling in the Inner Inn of the Temple at London, in haste.

I Greet you well and let you weet, that this day I was with my Daughter your wife, and she was in good heel (*health*) at the making of this letter, thanked be God! and she let your Sister and me weet of a letter which ye sent her, that ye have been laboured to for Sir William Oldhall[1] to have your Sister, and desiring in the said letter to have an answer in short time, how she will be demeaned in this matter.

Your Sister recommendeth her to you, and thanketh you heartily that ye will remember her, and let her have knowledge thereof, and prayeth you that ye will do your endeavour to bring it to a good conclusion, for she saith to me, that she trusteth that ye will do so, that it shall be both for her worship and profit; and, as for me, if ye can think that his Land standeth clear, in as much as I feel your Sister well willed thereto, I hold me well content.

And as for the Obligation of the Parson of Marlingford, which I sent you by John Newman, I pray you let it be sued; and as for the Parson and Lyndesey they be accorded, and God have you in his keeping, and send you his blessing and mine. Written at Norwich on Pulver-Wednesday (*Ash Wednesday*).

By your Mother,
Agnes Paston.

67. John Clopton's Suit

Unto [*my*] *right reverend Sir, and my good Master, John Paston.*

Right worthy and worshipful Sir, and my right good master, I recommend me unto you, thanking you evermore of your great gentleness and good masterhood

[1] A prominent Yorkist, Speaker of the 1450 Parliament, a soldier and owner of much property in Norfolk. He must have been, like Scroop, very much older than Elizabeth.

shewed unto me at all times, and specially now to my heart's ease, which on my part cannot be rewarded, but my simple service is ever ready at your commandment; furthermore as for the matter that ye weet of, I have laboured to my father that your intent as for the jointure shall be fulfilled; and Sir I beseech you since I do my part to fulfil your will, that ye will show me your good masterhood in her chamber[1] as my full trust is, insomuch that it shall nought hurt you nor none of yours, and the profit thereof shall be unto the avail of my mistress your sister, and to me, and to none other creature.

And also my mistress your mother shall not be charged with her board after the day of the marriage, but I to discharge her of her person; and to ease me, that hath her chamber, may be none contradiction.

And Sir I am ready, and always will to perform that I have said unto you, &c.

Furthermore liketh you to weet, I was on Thursday last past at Cavendish to deliver an estate to Wentworth in the land that was my brother Cavendish's, as I told you when I was last with you, and there I spake with Crane, and he besought me that I would send over to my mistress your mother for his excuse, for he might not be with her at this time; but on the Saturday in Easter-week he will not fail to be with her, so he counselled me that I and my brother [-in-law] Denton should meet with him there, and so without your better advice, I and my brother purpose us to be with you there at that time, for the sooner, the lever me, for, as to my conceit, the days be waxed wonderly long in a short time, wherefore I beseech you send me your advice how ye will have me ruled, &c.

No more I write to you at this present time, but beseeching you to recommend [me] in the lowliest wise, and the Trinity preserve you body and soul.

[1] Perhaps it means, some Expences for the accommodation of the Bride. (F.) It was a very usual arrangement for a parent to lodge and board a newly married couple for the first year, or even longer, as the equivalent of a dowry. Clopton apparently asks that Elizabeth, should he marry her, may have some outfit instead.

Written with my chancery hand in right great haste on the Friday before Palm Sunday.

Your

JOHN CLOPTON.

John Clopton, Esq., was one of those convicted on suspicion of receiving Letters from Queen Margaret with Sir Thomas Todenham, &c., before the Earl of Worcester, in February, 1461, when all of them, except Clopton, were beheaded. He married Alice, sister to Sir Robert Darcy, of Malden in Essex, and was alive in 1488. His father, Sir William Clopton, had estates at Long Melford, &c., in Suffolk. (F.)

68. CLOPTON'S MARRIAGE SETTLEMENT [1454 ?]

Marriage Articles betwixt Agnes Paston, &c. on the one part and William Clopton, Esq. on the other part.

THIS Indenture, made betwixt Agnes that was the wife of William Paston, John Paston her son, and John Damme[1] on the one part, and William Clopton, Esquire, on the other part, witnesseth that accord is taken atween the said parties, that John Clopton, son and heir of the said William Clopton, by the grace of God shall wed Elizabeth the daughter of the said Agnes, for which marriage the said Agnes, &c. shall pay to the said John Clopton 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in hand of lawful money of England, and over that (*besides*) if the said marriage be holden with the said Agnes, the said Agnes shall bear the costages thereof the day of the wedding, with such chambering (*feasting*) as shall be to the pleasure of the said Agnes; And the said William Clopton shall do (*take care that*) his Foeffees make a lawful estate to the said William of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 40*l.* over all charges borne, to have and hold to him [for the] term of his life without impeachment of waste, the remainder thereof to the said John and Elizabeth, and to his heirs male of her body lawfully begotten, without impeachment of waste, within twelve days after the said wedding.

[1] John Damme was a Burgess in Parliament for the City of Norwich (1450) and likewise Recorder. He acts as Trustee. Afterwards was murdered.

And over that, within the said twelve days the said John shall do lawful estate to be made to the said William of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 40 marks over all charges borne to have and hold to the said William [for] term of his life, without impeachment of waste, the remainder thereof to the said Elizabeth to have and hold to her [for] term of her life, without impeachment of waste.

Also it is accorded that the said William shall make estate of all the residue of his lands which he is seized of, or any other man to his use to such persons as the said John shall name, to the use of the said John.

Also the said John Clopton shall do lawful estate to be made to the said Elizabeth of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 30*l.* over all charges borne, to have and hold to her during the life of the said William.

And moreover the said John promiseth and ensureth by the faith of his body that he shall leave, over the 40*l.* worth land abovesaid, to his heirs and issue male of the body of the said Elizabeth begotten, lands in fee simple or in tail to the yearly value of 40 marks in case the same male issue be governed to the said John as the son oweth to be to the father. And, &c.

[But the marriage was never concluded.]

69. Grey of Ruthyn offers to bargain for Elizabeth (1451)

To my trusty and well beloved John Paston, Esquire, be this Letter delivered.

Trusty and well beloved Friend, I commend me to you, certifying you that and your Sister be not yet married, I trust to God I know that where she may be married to a gentleman of 300 marks (200*l.*) of livelihood, the which is a great gentleman born, and of good blood, and if ye think that I shall labour any farther therein, I pray you send me word by the bringer of this

Letter, for I have spoken with the parties, and they have granted me that they will proceed no farther therein till I speak with them again, and therefore I pray you send me word in haste how that ye will be disposed therein, and God have you in his keeping. Written at Ampthill, the 11th day of July last past.

By EDMOND GREY, LORD OF HASTYNGS,
WAIFFORD, and RUTHYN.

70. JOHN PASTON'S REPLY

The Lord Grey.

RIGHT worshipful and my right good Lord, I recommend me to our Lordship, and whereas it pleased your Lordship to direct your Letter to me for a marriage for my poor Sister to a Gentleman of your knowledge of 300 marks livelihood, in case she were not married; wherefore I am greatly bound to do your lordship service; for sooth my Lord she is not married, nor insured to no man; there is and hath been, divers times and late, communication of such marriages with divers gentlemen not determined as yet, and whether the gentleman that your Lordship meaneth of be one of them or nay I doubt; and whereas your said Letter specifieth that I should send you word whether I thought you should labour farther in the matter or nay; in that my Lord I dare not presume to write so to you without I know the gentleman's name; notwithstanding, my Lord, I shall take upon me with the advice of other of her friends, that she shall neither be married nor insured to no creature, nor farther proceed in no such matter before the feast of the Assumption of our Lady (*15th of August*) next coming, during which time your Lordship may send me, if it please you, certain information of the said gentleman's name, and of the place and country where his livelihood lieth, and whether he hath any children; and after I shall demean me in the matter as your Lordship shall be pleased; for in good faith, my Lord, it were to me great joy that my said poor sister

were, according to her poor degree, married by your advice, trusting then that ye would be her good Lord.

Right worshipful and my right good Lord I beseech Almighty God to have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the 15th day of July.

This letter, being only a Copy, has no concluding Subscription. (F.)

71. William Paston's Opinion

To my right worshipful brother John Paston, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful brother I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare. Billing the Serjeant hath been in his country, and he came to London this week; he sent for me and asked me how I fared; I told him here is Pestilence; and said I fared the better [that] he was in good health for it was noised that he was dead; a took me to him, and asked how my Sister did, and I answered, well, never better; he said he was with the Lord Grey, and they talked of a gentleman which is Ward to my Lord, I remember he said it was Harry Grey that they talked of; and my Lord said, "I was busy within this few days to a married him to a gentlewoman in Norfolk, that shall have 400 marks to her marriage, and now he will not by me, for 400 marks would do me ease, and now he would have his marriage money himself, and therefore, quoth he, he shall marry himself for me." [1]

These words had my Lord to Billing, as he told me, he understood that my Lord laboured for his own avail; and counselled to bid her be wise; and I thanked him for his good counsel.

I sent you an answer of your Letter of Sir John Fastolf's coming home as he told me himself, nevertheless he bode longer than he said himself he should a do.

He told me he should make an end betwixt Scroop

[1] *I.e.*, Lord Grey meant to pocket Elizabeth's dowry, but his ward refused consent—so the marriage was off.

and my Sister while he is in Norfolk; many would it should not prove, for they say it is an unlikely marriage.

In case Cressener be talked of any more, he is counted a gentlemanly man and a worshipful, ye know who is most worshipful better than I; at the reverence of God draw to some conclusion, it is time.

My Lord Chancellor come not here, since I came to London, neither my Lord of York.

My Lord of Canterbury hath received his Cross, and I was with him in the King's Chamber when he made his homage; I told Harry Wilton the demeaning betwixt the King and him, it were too long to write.

As for the Priest that did arrest me, I cannot understand that it is the Priest that ye mean.

Here is great Pestilence, I purpose to flee into the Country. My Lord of Oxford is come again fro the sea, and he hath gotten him little thank in this country; much more thing I would write to you, but I lack leisure.

Harry Wilton saw the King. My Lord of Ely hath done his fealty. God have you in his blessed keeping.

Written at London, on the Friday before our Lady's-day the nativity (*8th Sept.*) in great haste. I pray recommend me to my Sister and to my Cousin Clere.

By your Brother,

WILLIAM PASTON.[1]

72. ELIZABETH POYNINGS ON BEHALF OF HER HUSBAND.[2]

To my right worshipful Mother Agnes Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and my most entirely beloved mother, in the most lowly manner I recommend me unto your good motherhood, beseeching you daily and nightly of

[1] William Paston was the fourth son of the Judge, and having been a steady Lancastrian, had a pardon for all treasons, &c., under the great seal, dated 16th of July, 1468.

[2] Elizabeth had at last secured a husband in Robert Poynings. See note next page.

your motherly blessing, evermore desiring to hear of your welfare and prosperity, the which I pray God to continue and increase to your heart's desire; and if it liked your motherhood to hear of me and how I do at the making of this letter, I was in good health of body thanked be Jesu; and as for my master, my best beloved that ye call, and I must needs call him so now, for I find none other cause, and as I trust to Jesu never shall, for he is full kind unto me, and is as busy as he can to make me sure of my Jointure, whereto he is bound in a Bond of a thousand pounds to you mother, and to my brother John, and to my brother William, and to Edmund Clere, the which needed so such bond; wherefore, I beseech your good mother, as our most singular trust is in your good motherhood, that my master, my best beloved, fail not of the hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) at the beginning of this term, the which ye promised him to his marriage, with the remanant of the money of father's will; for I have promised faithfully to a Gentleman called Bain, that was one of my best beloved's sureties, and was bound for him in two hundred pounds, of which he rehearseth for to receive at the beginning of this term one hundred and twenty pounds, and if he fail thereof at this time, he will claim the whole of us, the which were to us too great an hurt; and he cannot make an end with none of his other sureties without this said silver, and that can my brother John tell you well enough and it lusteth him to do so, and in all other things. As to my Lady Pool, with whom I sojourned, that ye will be my tender and good mother, that she may be paid for all the costs done to me before my marriage, and to Christopher Houson, as ye wrote unto my brother John, that it should have been so; and that it please your good motherhood to give credence to William Worcester;[1]

[1] Robert Poynings, younger brother of Robert, Lord Poynings, was deeply concerned in the rebellion of Cade, to whom he had acted as sword-bearer. He married Elizabeth in 1459. See Letter 43. The Pastons evidently got the better of him in the marriage contract. W. Worcester was employed in negotiating the marriage, at a fee of 10*s.* (*cf.* G., 373).

and Jesu for his great mercy save you; Written at London, the Wednesday the 3 day of January.

By your humble Daughter,

ELIZABETH PONYNGGS.

73. ELIZABETH WIDOWED (1468)

To the worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight [her nephew, John and Margaret's son] *be this delivered in haste.*

WORSHIPFUL and with all mine heart entirely well-beloved Nephew, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, which I pray Almighty God maintain and increase to his pleasure, and your heart's desire, thanking God of your amending and health. Furthermore certifying you that Sir Robert Fynes hath done great hurt in the livelihood which pertained to my Husband and me, in the Shire of Kent, wherein William Keene and other persons are enfeoffed, and greatly troubleth it, and receiveth the issues and profits of great part of them, and as of my said Husband's livelihood, as well in the same Shire as in other Shires.

Beside mine jointure, my said Husband, when he departed towards the field of St. Alban's,[1] made and ordained his will, that I should have the rule of all his livelihood, and of Edward his son and mine, and to take the issues and profits of the said livelihood, to the finding of his and mine said son, to pay his debts, and to keep the right and title of the same livelihood, which I might not accordingly occupy for Sir Edward Poynings, mine said Husband's Brother, and so since my said Husband's departing, I assigned that the said Sir Edward for certain years should have and take the revenues of the Manors at Westwood, Eastwell, Loneland, Horsemonden, Totingdon, Eccles, Standon, and Combesden, parcel of the said livelihood, which are clearly yearly worth *76l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to the intent that the

[1] The second battle, 1461, in which he was slain. The Earl of Northumberland married his sister and claimed his property.

said Sir Edward should pay mine Husband's debts, for he would not suffer me to be in rest without that he might have a rule in the livelihood; and after the said assignment made, the said Robert Fynes, contrary to truth, and without cause of right, interrupted me and the said Sir Edward, as well of and in the said manors as of other manors underwritten, whereupon the same Sir Edward sued unto the King's Highness, [Edward IV.] and had the King's honourable Letters under his signet, directed to the said Sir Robert Fynes, the tenour whereof I send unto you herein enclosed; and as for residue of the livelihood of mine said Husband's and mine, within the same Shire of Kent, wherein the said William Keene and other are enfeoffed, that is to say, the manor of Tyrlingham, Wolverton, Halton, Newington, Bartram, Rokesley and Northcray, with the appurtenances, I of them, by mine said Husband's will, should have residue, and take the issues and profits of them, contrary to right and conscience, taking away my right, and breaking my said Husband's will, the said Robert Fynes hath done great waste and hurt there, and long time hath taken up the revenues and profits of the same, where thorough I have not my right, and the said will may not be performed.

Wherefore I heartily pray you that ye will labour unto the King's Highness, that it liketh him address his honourable Letters to be directed to the said Robert Fynes, discharging him utterly of the menurance, occupation, and receipt of the revenues of the said manors of Tyrlingham and other, according to the tenour of the letters laboured by Sir Edward, for the manors assigned to him from the King's Highness, directed to the same Robert Fynes, or straiter if it may be, and that I and mine assigns may peaceably re-enjoy them; and if any person would attempt to do the contrary, that a commandment, if it please the King's Highness, by him might be given to my Lord Chancellor to seal writings sufficient with his Great Seal, in aiding and assisting me and mine assigns in the same.

And as for the manors of Easthall, Faulkham, Asslie,

Chelsfield, with the appurtenances in the said Shire of Kent, whereof my Husband at his departure was seised, and my Son since, unto the time that the Earl of Kent[1] without any inquisition or title of right for the King, by colour of the King's Letters Patents, entered into them, and him thereof put out, and now my Lord of Essex[1] occupieth them in like manner and form; if any remedy therein will be had, I pray you attempt it.

Also, furthermore I heartily pray you that if any general pardon be granted, that I may have one for John Dane my servant, whom the said Robert Fynes of great malice had endicted of felony, and that ye secretly labour this, and send me an answer in writing in as goodly haste as ye may; as soon as it may please you to send me parcels of costs and expenses ye bear and pay for the said causes, I will truly content you it of the same, and over that reward you to your pleasure, by the grace of Jesu, who have you in his blessed keeping. Written in Southwark, the 15th day of December,

By your aunt
ELIZABETH POYNINGS.

74. ELIZABETH REMARRIED. SHE TESTIFIES TO HER FATHER'S WILL (1485)

To my Right Worshipful and heartily beloved Nephew, John Paston, Esq. [*her younger nephew*].

RIGHT worshipful and my right heartily beloved nephew I recommend me to you; and whereas ye desire me to send you word, whether my brother John Paston, your father, was with my father and his, whom God assoil! during his last sickness and at the time of his decease at St. Bride's or not.

Nephew, I ascertain you upon my faith and poor honour, that I was 14, 15 year, or 16 year old, and at St. Bride's with my father and my mother, when my

[1] Creations of Edward IV., Lord Grey of Ruthyn (Kent), and Henry, Lord Bourchier (Essex).

father's last sickness took him, and till he was deceased; and I dare depose before any person honourable, that when my father's last sickness took him, my brother your father was in Norfolk, and he came not to London till after that my father was deceased; and that can Sir William Cooting and James Gresham record, for they both were my father's clerks at that time; and I remember and wot well, that James Gresham was with my father at St. Bride's during all his sickness, and at his decease, and this I will witness while I live for a truth, as knoweth God, whom I beseech to preserve you and yours.

And, Nephew, I pray you recommend [me] to my niece your wife, whom I would be glad to see once again in London, where this bill was written, signed with mine hand and sealed with my seal (the Thursday next before Whitsunday, the second year of King Richard the Third), the 23d day of September, the first year of the reign of King Henry the VIIth.

Your loving Aunt,

ELIZABETH BROWNE.

[Elizabeth married Sir George Browne of Beechworth, Surrey, a gentleman of the household of Edward IV., afterwards a follower of the Duke of Buckingham (1484), (*cf.* Gairdner, 962). He proved a good friend to his brothers-in-law. The Letter appears to be a copy, and the first date is crossed out. The Battle of Bosworth was fought on Aug. 22. Aunt Elizabeth was now the wealthy woman of her family, she died 1487]. (G., vol. vi., p. 201.)

NOTE FROM SIR G. BROWNE (undated).

To my trusty and well-beloved Cousin John Paston, Esq. in haste.

Loyawlte Ayme (*Love Loyalty*).

By your own

G. BROWNE.

It shall never come out for me.

PART V

SIR JOHN FASTOLFE AND HIS WILL

FASTOLFE'S CONNECTION

Sir John Fastolfe's sister married Sir Philip Braunch and thus connected him with the Cleres and Pastons. Presumably she was an elder sister, *cf.* Appendix II. (5). The Braunch family were eminent citizens of Lynn. Sir Philip fought and was slain in France, and buried at Cooling.

Cooling Castle, near Rochester, an inheritance of the Lords Cobham, had gone, by marriages of heiresses and exchanges of property, to the Blyants, whose representative, Robert Crane, a cousin of the Pastons, conveyed it to Sir John Fastolfe and others, 1442. Previously it had been for some time in the possession of Sir John Oldcastle, as 4th husband of one heiress. This forms another link between the "Old Lad of the Castle"—Oldcastle—Fastolfe—Falstaff of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The Blyants put in a claim to Hemnales in Cotton, about 1467.

PART V

75. Sir John Fastolfe on his Adversaries (1450)

To my trusty and wellbeloved Friend, Sir Thomas Howes, Parson of Castlecomb.

Trusty and wellbeloved Friend, I greet you well. (*Here follow some Orders respecting his Affairs at Caister.*) And I pray you send me word who dare be so hardy to kick against you in my right; and say them on my [be] half that they shall be quiet (*quit*) as far as Law and Reason will; and if they will not dread nor obey, that then they shall be quiet (*quit*) by Blackbeard or Whitebeard, that is to say, by God or the Devil; and therefore I charge you, send me word whether such as have been mine Adversaries before this time, continue still in their willfulness, &c.

Item, I hear oft times many strange Reports of demeaning (*mismanaging*) of the governance of my place at Caister and other places, as, in my Chattel approving (*goods being sold*), in my Wines, the keeping of my Wardrobe and Cloths, the Avail of my Conies (*profit of rabbit warren*) at Hellesdon, &c. and Approvement (*raising rents*) of my Lands; praying you heartily, as my full trust is in you, to help reform it.

And that ye suffer no vicious man at my place of Caister to abide, but well governed and diligent, as ye will answer to it.

Almighty God keep you. Written at London, the

27th day of May, in the 28th year of the reign of King Henry VIth.

JOHN FASTOLF, Kt.

Sir John Fastolfe was born about the year 1377, in the last year of the reign of Edward III., and is said to have been brought up in the Norfolk family.

In 1408, 9 H. IV., he married in Ireland Milicent, Daughter of Robert Lord Tibetot, and Relict of Sir Stephen Scroop, by whom she had a son Stephen [whom Fastolfe treated very badly].

From the year 1412, 13 H. IV., to the year 1440, 18 H. VI., he was chiefly engaged in the wars in France, where he performed many gallant actions, and acquired honour and wealth. He took the Duke of Alençon prisoner at the battle of Verneuil, in 1424, in 1425 was created Baron of Sillie le Guillem, and in 1426 was elected into the order of the Garter.

After his return and settlement in his native country, he became a great builder; and at Caister are still to be seen such magnificent remains of his Seat or Castle, as even now do testify its former state and grandeur; it was a square building of brick, coped with free stone, each side of it being about 300 feet long, having a large and lofty Tower at each corner, one of which was a few years ago standing almost entire. The Hall, we are informed, was 59 feet long and 28 broad; the whole was surrounded by a moat, and was a place in those days of strength and defence. In the year 1469, 9 E. IV., it sustained a siege by the Duke of Norfolk. After the death of Sir John Fastolfe this was for several generations the seat of the Paston family, and so continued until [Admiral] Clement Paston, in the reign of Elizabeth, built Oxnead Hall, which then becoming their chief place of residence, this noble mansion began to be neglected. . . . Fastolfe likewise built a splendid house in Yarmouth, and a palace in Southwark. At length, being nearly 83 years of age, and as he says of himself in his will, dated 4th Nov., 1459, "in good remembraunce albeit gretely vexed with sickness, and through age infebelyd," he departed this life, without issue, on Monday, the 5th of November, 1459, 38 H. VI., at his Manor of Caister, and was most sumptuously buried in the Conventual Church of St. Bennet in the Holm, in Norfolk, under the Arch of the new Chapel, which he had lately rebuilt there, on the south side of the Choir or Chancel, under a marble tomb by the Body of Dame Milicent his wife. [Fenn.]

76. PRICE OF LAND (1450)

To my right trusty Friend Sir Thomas Howys, parson of Castlecomb, being at Caister, and William Barker in haste, at Caister Inn, by Yarmouth.

RIGHT trusty and wellbeloved friend I greet you well, and as for Heigham's place[1] to be sold, as ye advise me to buy it at the sum of an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*)

[1] Possibly Potter Heigham.

or within, and reserve in the said payment mine own duty, and pay the remanent in wool to the said Heigham's creditors as your letter maketh mention; I have understood that William Jenney shall be here this week, and I shall feel him how near it may be sold; for if the widow will sell it after fourteen year or fifteen year, that it may be lett, send me utterly word, for I will not meddle of it else thus advised; and send ye me word how much more in value in a stone shall I sell my wool, and how much another chapman will give me for the place, when I have bought it; but after fourteen year I will buy the place.

Written at London, the 15th day of October, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF.

In 1470, twenty years after this time, the Reward offered for apprehending the Duke of Clarence was 1000*l.* in money, or 100*l.* a year in land. This seems to fix land at that period at only ten years' purchase; perhaps the preceding civil wars had caused this abatement in its value. [Fenn.]

77. PREPARING LAWSUITS

To my right trusty Friend and Servant, Sir Thomas (Howes), *parson of Castlecombe, and John Bocking, at Prince's Inn, in Norwich, or at Beccles.*

RIGHT trusty and well beloved servant, I greet you well, and forasmuch as I understand that on Monday next the oyer and terminer shall be holden at Beccles, and ye advise to send you a certificate for cause of the forged quittance by Sir John Sypton, which writing I send you by the bearer hereof, praying you that ye solicit to my counsel that the said Sir John Sypton be endicted thereupon, and that ye forget not Ulveston, Andrews, and the others that forged a false office to cast my manor of Bradwell into the King's hand.

Item, I send you a copy of Sypton's plea and quittance forged, to ground your bill by it.

No more for haste, but God keep you, written at London, the 4th day of December, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

Item, Sir John Buck, parson of Stratford, fished my stanks at Dedham, and helped to break my dam, destroyed my new mill, and was against me always at Dedham, to the damage of 20*l.* which may be endicted also.

Item, he and John Cole hath by force this year, and other years taken out of my waters at Dedham, to the number of 24 swans and cygnets. I pray you this be not forgotten.

JOHN FASTOLF.

At the time here mentioned, forgery was an offence at common law only [*i.e.*, not felony, a crime against the Crown], and the punishment was usually fine and imprisonment. (F.)

78. WILLIAM WORCESTER'S POOR PROSPECTS [1454?]

To my Master Paston.
H. R.

AFTER due recommendation with my simple service preceding, please your mastership to weet, that as to such remembrance that ye desire me to continue forth to the uttermost, I shall with good will, so as my Master will licence me as oft as I can the officer to have leisure to be with me, for ye know well I cannot do it alone, &c.

And whereas ye of your pleasure write me, or call me Master Worcester, I pray and require you forget that name of mastership, for I am not amended by my Master of a farthing in certainty, but of wages of household in common entant comme nous plaira; by [the name of] Worcester or Botoner, I have five Shillings yearly, all costs borne, to help to pay for Bonnets that I lose; I told so my Master this week, and he said me yesterday, he wished me to have been a Priest so I had been disposed, to have given me a living by reason (*means*) of a Benefice, that another man must give it, as the Bishop, but (*if*) he would; and so I indure inter egenos ut servus ad aratrum.

Forgive me, I write to make you laugh; and our

Lord bring my Master into a better mood for others as [well as] for me. At Caister, the 2nd day of September.

I pray you displeasure not your Servant be so long, for my Master letted (*hindered*) him.

Your,
W. WORCESTER.

William Worcester (or Botoner), one of Fastolfe's most useful and intimate servants, acted usually as his secretary. He and Paston expected to benefit each other, but Paston afterwards refused to recompense Worcester for the assistance given in Fastolfe's lifetime, and Worcester then joined with Paston's rivals and helped them to dispute the Will (bequeathing the property to Paston) which Howes and Worcester had themselves propounded. Worcester, antiquary and scholar, left a chronicle rich in personal details. MASTER, implying the dignified M.A. degree, was a gentlemanly title which Worcester hints he had not means to support. He was a layman and married, so could not hold a benefice.

79. T. HOWES SUGGESTS A MATCH (1454)

To the worshipful Sir, and my good Master John Paston, at London, in haste.

WORSHIPFUL and reverend Sir, and my good master, I recommend me to you in as diligent wise as on my part appertaineth, and please you to weet that my master was right well pleased with your faithful labour in fulfilling the Patent for the Ward of A. B. C.[1] and he will faithfully labour as ye have advised him by writing of John Bocking; and [to] put my master in more courage, I moved to him upon mine head, that in case be the Child were wise, that then it were a good marriage between my [mistress] your daughter and him;[2] and, Sir, my master was glad when he heard that mean, considering that your daughter is descended of him by the mother's side; and, Sir, I have enquired after the said child, and no doubt of, but he is likely and of great wit, as I hear by report of sundry persons; and it

[1] Apparently Thomas Fastolfe, of Cowhawe, Suffolk, a boy about 14 whose wardship Sir John obtained, by Paston's help, and whom he treated with the same injustice as he had done his stepson, Stephen Scroop.

[2] Either Anne or Margery, daughters of J. Paston, the elder of whom could not have been at this time more than ten years old.

is so, as I am credibly informed, that Jeffrey Boleyn maketh great labour for marriage of the said child to one of his daughters; I would well to him, but better to you; wherefore that ye diligently labour for expedition of this matter, that in case ye can find any mean there to have the said child, and we shall do faithfully our diligence in like wise here, as ye advise us, &c.

And, Sir, as ye think with advice of my master Yelverton, Jenny, and others my master's counsel therein, that the Sheriff may be rewarded (*bribed*), and if my said master's counsel think it be to [be] done, that then ye like to take an Action upon an Atteint (*against a jury for a false verdict*) which ye must with them take upon you at this time in my master's absence (*on your sole responsibility*), for as ye do in that matter he will hold him content, for William Barker hath an instruction of my master's intent upon the same. And I send John Barker a copy of the panel, which I shewed you at Caister, &c.

Almighty Jesu have you eternally in his merciful governance. Written at Caister the Wednesday next after Saint Martin, anno 33 (H. VI.)

THOMAS HOWYS.[1]

80. FASTOLFE INSULTED (1455)

To my right trusty and well beloved Cousin John Paston, in goodly haste.

RIGHT trusty and well beloved Cousin, I commend me to you, and please you to weet that I am advertised that

[1] Howes, rector of Castlecombe, Wiltshire, and Blofield, Norfolk, and in course of time incumbent of other preferments, including Margaret Paston's Rectory of Mautby, was, like Worcester, for years engaged in securing John Paston's interests with Fastolfe. At the close of his life he was discontented at Paston's treatment of him, and on his deathbed declared that the Will he and Worcester had produced was a forgery. He was employed by Fastolfe as a man of business, and his title, *Sir* Thomas, implies that he was not a Master of Arts.

at a Dinner in Norwich, where as ye and other Gentlemen were present that there were certain persons, Gentlemen, which uttered scornful language of me, as in this wise with more, saying, "Ware thee, Gosune,[1] ware, and go we to dinner, go we where? to Sir John Fastolf's, and there we shall well pay therefore." What their meaning was I know well to be no good intent to me ward; wherefore, Cousin, I pray you, as my trust is in you, that ye give me knowledge by writing what Gentlemen they be that had this report with more; and what more gentleman were present, as ye would I should, and [it] were my duty to do, for you in semblable (*similar*) wise.[2] And I shall keep your information in this matter secret; and with God's grace so purvey for them as they shall not all be well pleased. At such a time a man may know his friends and his foes as under, &c.

Jesu preserve and keep you, written at Caister, the 7th day of February, in the 33rd year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, Knight.

81. FASTOLFE'S GREAT CLAIM AGAINST THE CROWN (1455)

Billa de debitis Regis in partibus Franciæ Johanni Fastolf militi debitis.

[Summarised, see in full, G. 309, F. III. 66.]

THESE be the Injuries, Losses, and Damages that the said Fastolf hath had, as well within the Realm of England as in other parts in manner and form as it ensueth,

[1] Gascon? *i.e.*, boaster. (F.) Cousin? (G.), perhaps Gossoon (lad), *i.e.*, addressing his companions, *Look out, boys, if we go to dinner with Fastolfe he will make us pay for it well*—a jeer at his well-known miserly ways.

[2] Paston, too, was a niggard.

	£	s.	d.
First, it is to consider how that the said Fastolf hath been vexed and troubled since he came last into this land by the might and power of the Duke of Suffolk, and by the labour of his counsel and servants in divers wise, as in great oppressions, grievous and outrageous amercements, and many great horrible extortions, as it may appear more plainly by a roll of Articles thereupon made, the damages of which extend to the sum of 5000 marks - =	3333	6	8
Item, taking away a manor called Dedham, in the County of Essex, to the value of 100 marks of yearly rent, with 200 marks in costs - - - - =	333	6	8
Item, there is cast into the King's hands by untrue forged inquisitions, three Manors of Fastolf, to the value of 100 marks yearly, and costs, the sum of 500 marks - - - - - - - - - =	333	6	8
Item, Fastolf having the gift of the Lordship of Sillie Guillem, in the County of Maine, gotten by the said Fastolf, he was commanded by the King's Letters to deliver up the Lordship to the King's Commissioners, to damages of the said Fastolf, 2500 marks - - - - - =	1666	13	4
Item, Whereas the said Fastolf had a Prisoner of his own taking, which agreed to pay him for his ransom 3200 Saluts, the Prisoner was taken away from him by the Duke of Bedford, and the town of Compeyn, then lying in the French party's governance, for to be yielded to the King, and Fastolf was recompensed but to the value of 1600 Saluts [£2000] in lands in Normandy, which lands he hath also lost; sum, 4000 marks - - - - - - - - =	2666	13	4

	£	s.	d.
Item, Fastolf is yet owing for his reward due to him for the taking of John, Duke of Alanson, at the battle of Verneuil, 4000 marks - - - - =	2666	13	4
Item, is due by the Last Will and Testament of John Duke of Bedford, whose soul God assoil! for Charges for safeguard and keeping of certain Fortresses, and Towns [etc.] 4599 *marks.* 5*s.* 6*d.* =	3066	5	6
Sum total 21099 *marks.* 5*sh.* 6 *pence.* =	14066	5	6

Item, Since the last coming over of the said Fastolf into this realm [1440], by the space of 15 years and more, he hath borne great expences, attending upon the King's Highness, and the Lords of his Council, as he hath had in commandment, and was his part to do, for the which, and for all the service that he hath done to the right noble Prince King Harry the IV. Ayeul (*grandfather*) to our Sovereign Lord that now is, and to the most victorious Prince and King his father, whose souls God assoil, and also to our said Sovereign Lord, he hath had neither fee nor recompence in this realm of England, but hath borne it of his own proper goods, trusting to have been considered and rewarded as other men of such deserving have been in the times of the right noble Projenitors of our said Sovereign Lords late Kings of this said Realm.

1455. 33 H. VI.

This list is given as an instance of the impudent claims made by the Lords on national funds. Fastolfe was one of the Generals driven out of France after Bedford's death, and he claims *compensation* for what

he had surrendered. He acknowledges that it was his duty to attend Councils, etc., yet demands to be paid his expenses. Against his assertion that he had never fee or reward in England stands the fact that he was extremely wealthy. That the Duke of Bedford's bequests were not yet paid was largely his own fault, the Will not having been carried out by the Executors, F. being one, the rest, by 1455, were dead. He was, however, merely following the example of the Duke of York, Duke of Somerset, Earl of Warwick, etc.

82. Fastolfe thinks of his Will (1455)

To My Master John Paston.

Please your mastership to weet that . . . My Master demandeth me sundry times when ye shall be here; I could not say till this day be passed; William Jenney shall be here to-morrow, so would Jesu ye were here then. I asked licence to ride into my Country, and my Master did not grant it; he said his Will was to make, &c. I answered, "it fit not me to know it." God give him grace of wholesome counsel, and of a good disposition, non est opus unius diei, nec unius septimanæ.

My Lord Bedford's Will was made in so brief and general terms, that unto this day by the space of twenty years can never have end, but always new to construe, and opiniable; so a generality shall nor may be so good as a particular declaration.

I write bluntly; I had forgotten to have told you Master Fylongley moved me to inform my Master to have a general peace, so it might be worshipful. I have said no word, for I cannot meddle in high matters that passeth my wit; and therefore if ye and W. Jenney meet together ye know and can divine best what is to be done. Our Lord be with you; writ hastily, 6th day of January.

W. Botoner. H.R.[1]

[1] Botoner, *alias* William Worcester, uses H.R. in his signatures oddly. Friar Brackley probably means Worcester when he writes "W. W. Hibernicus." Worcester has a favourite phrase—"I would he were in Ireland," and H.R. may stand for "Hiber."

83. Fastolfe pursues his claim on Alençon's Ransom (1456)

To the worshipful Sir, and my right well beloved Cousin John Paston, and in his Absence to John Bocking, or William Barker.

Worshipful Sir and Cousin, I recommend me to you, and like you to weet that I have a Tally[1] with my Cousin Fenn of 500 marks and more, for to be charged upon such places, as a man might have most speedy payment; and I pray you heartily to commune with the said Fenn that I might be insured of the said Tally to be exchanged, and for what reward competent to be given upon the same, I will agree to it.

Item, I desire to know who be the Residue, the remanent of the Co-Executors of the Lord Willoughby,[2] now the Lord Cromwell is deceased; for this cause, it was so, that there was due to the Lord Willoughby and to me 10,000 marks for a Reward to be paid of my Lord Bedford's Goods, for the taking of the Duke of Alençon.

And the said Lord Willoughby had but one thousand marks paid, and I one thousand marks, so 8000 remaineth yet to pay; of which Sum, 4000 must grow to the Executors of the said Lord Willoughby to dispose.

And therefore I desire that the Executors, and such as most have interest in the Lord Willoughby's Goods, may be communed with; that they make pursuit for payment of the said 4000 marks, for his part to be had, and I shall make for my part.

And [if] Master Nevile,[3] the which hath wedded my

[1] A cleft stick, both parts of which were notched according to the sum of money advanced, and of which one part was given to the Creditor, while the other remained with the Debtor. Hence the Tallier of the Exchequer, now called the Teller. (F.)

[2] Robert Willoughby Lord Willoughby, an eminent Commander, present at the battle of Agincourt, in 1415; and at the battle of Verneuil, in 1424, where he and Sir John Fastolfe took the Duke of Alençon prisoner. He was a close ally of Lord Cromwell.

[3] Sir Thomas, younger son of the Earl of Salisbury and brother of the king-maker Warwick, extremely turbulent.

Lady Willoughby, have power, or interest to receive the Lord Willoughby's Debts, then he to be laboured unto. And my Lord of Salisbury will be a great helper in this cause.

The King, which is Supervisor of my Lord Bedford's Testament, hath written, and commanded by sundry Letters, that the said Lord Willoughby should be content (*paid*) for his part; and so much the matter is the forwarder.

And there is one Young, a servant of the Lord Willoughby, which pursued this matter; if he were in London, he could give good information upon this matter.

I pray you write to me how my matters do, and of such novelties as ye have there, and our Lord have you in his keeping.

Written at Caister hastily, the 5th day of February, in the 34th year of King Henry VIth.

Your Cousin,
JOHN FASTOLF.

84. FASTOLFE WILL FOUND A COLLEGE OF PRIESTS AT CAISTER (1456)

To the worshipful, and my right well beloved Cousin, John Paston, at the Temple, or to William Barker, at Southwark, be this delivered.

WORSHIPFUL Cousin, I commend me to you, and whereas I late wrote unto you, in a Letter by Henry Hansson, for the foundation of my College; I am sore set thereupon; and that is the cause I write now, to remember you again to move my Lords of Canterbury and Winchester for the License to be obtained, that I might have the amortizing[1] without any great Fine; in recompence of my long service continued, and done unto the King, and to his noble Father, whom God assoil,—and never yet guerdoned or rewarded.

[1] Permission to endow it with lands, in spite of the Statutes against Mortmain. Heavy fees were charged for such a favour.

And now since I have ordained to make the King Founder,[1] and ever to be prayed for; and for his right noble Progenitors, his Father and Uncles, methinketh I should not be denied of my desire, but the rather to be remembered and sped.

Wherefore, as I wrote unto you, I pray you acquaint me and you, for the rather speed hereof, with a Chaplain of my Lord of Canterbury, that in your absence may remember me, and in likewise with my Lord Chancellor; for seeing the King's Disposition, and also his, unto the edifying of God's service, it might in no better time be moved, &c.

My Lord of Norfolk is removed from Framlingham on foot to go to Walsingham, and daily I wait that he would come hither.

Your Cousin,
JOHN FASTOLF.

85. PROHIBITIVE FEE: A CHEAPER ALTERNATIVE

To my right worshipful Uncle, and my right good Master, Sir John Fastolf, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Uncle, and my right good Master, I recommend me to you with all my service.

And Sir, my Brother Paston and I have communed together as touching to your College that ye would have made, and Sir, it is too great a good (*Sum*) that is asked of you for your License; for they ask for every 100 marks that ye would amortise 500 marks, and will give it no better cheap.

And Sir, I told my Brother Paston, that my Lady Abergavenny hath in diverse Abbeys of Leicestershire, seven or eight Priests singing for her perpetually, by my Brother Darcy's and my Uncle Brokesby's means, for they were her Executors; and they accorded for money and gave a 200 or 300 marks, as they might accord for a Priest.

[1] It was not unusual to name a great person as Founder, though he gave nothing, that his influence might prevent robbery of the endowment.

And for the Surety [1] that he should sing in the same Abbey for ever they had Manors of good value bounden to such Person as pleased the said Brethren, Brokesby, and my Brother Darcy, that the said service should be kept.

And for little more than the King asked them for a License, they went through with the said Abbots.

And I hold this way as sure as that other; ye may commune with your Counsel thereof.

And if there be any service that I may do for you, it shall be ready at all times with the grace of God, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the 17th day of July.

Your Nephew and Servant,
HENRY FYLUNGLEY.

86. FASTOLFE DESCRIBED BY WINDSOR [1456?]

AFTER humble and due recommendation, please it your good mastership to understand, that at making of this my poor Letter there were no novelties with us, but such as ye understood full well afore your departing, except the King will into Scotland in all manner wise of war, and that my Lord of Wiltshire shall be made Chancellor, I suppose the [rumour] is but a slander, and therefore be ye advised how ye deliver them as tidings. . . .

Sir, I pray you, how some-ever my Master reckoneth with any of his Servants, bring not the matter in revolution in the open Court, for and it were once opened before the Judges, how that any Letters Patent should be purchased of an *ante* date [2] and the default found in me, ye would be a thousand times advised and my Master F. (*Fastolf*) both, ere that ye would amend me so much as I should be appered (*injured*) thereby [3];

[1] This is a curious fact, as it shows us how security was given by the Abbies, etc., to the Parties contracting for a Mass or Service, that it should be continued for ever in the same Abbey, &c. (F.)

[2] An earlier date having been fraudulently affixed: a common practice with venal officials at Court.

[3] *I.e.*, it would be impossible for you and F. to indemnify me.

and therefore I beseech you be well advised how that matter be opened, for my ease.

I was not desired to write unto you of no one person, so God be my help, yourself except; but I would ye would take advice and counsel of the Priest [Howes], that had you so long under hands on Shor Thursday (*before Good Friday*), when I and my fellowship, God thank you, had of you right great cheer to our great comfort and your great cost. . . .

My Master can do nothing, the which shall come in open audience at these days, but it shall be called your deed, and it is not unknown that cruel and vengible he hath been ever, and for the most part without pity and mercy. I can no more, but "vade et corripe eum" for truly he cannot bring about his matters in this world for the world is not for him (*circumstances are against him*); I suppose it will not change yet by likeliness, but I beseech you Sir, help not to amend him only, but every other man, if ye know any more misdisposed.

I can no more, but, as I can or may, shall be his servant and yours unto such time as ye will command me to surcease and leave off, if it please him.

Sir, I pray you take this Copy of your Statute, it is not examined by me, for I found it these five years passed.

Written in my sleeping time, at afternoon, on Whitsunday. . . .

Your own,
HENRY WINDSOR.

87. FASTOLFE'S MIS-MANAGEMENT DESCRIBED BY WORCESTER (1457)

To the right worshipful Sir, John Paston, Esquire, being in Norwich, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, after due recommendation, please you to weet that I wrote a remembrance to you the day that I departed out of Norwich, by Richard, the

Parson's servant of Blofield, concerning certain matters to be remembered by your wisdom for my Master's avail, which your great wisdom can well understand is right needful, as one thing in especial, that Shipdam and Spyrling ought to labour, first of any thing that belongeth, to audit the accounts of the Receipts and Dispenses of my Master's household in Caister, since he came last into Norfolk, which as well for the provisions that is had of his own growing as in money paid; for till the said Accounts be made ordinately (*methodically*,) which be of a great charge yearly, weet ye for certain my Master shall never know whether he goeth backward or forward; and many other Accomptants that maken livery (*delivery*) of provisions of Corns and Cattle to the household by the Receiver and by the Bailiffs cannot approve their Liberates (*accounts*) just, till the said household books be made up; and since it hath been kept ordinarily since my Master began to keep house this fifty year almost, and when he hath been absent beyond sea, &c. it ought [to] be more readilier done and made up while he is present, and well the rather that his household meny (*Family*) were not so whole together this forty year as be now at Caister. Also his ministers of Accounts of his chief manor of Heylesdon for three years to make up and to examine; and I assure you full simply approved (*ignorantly managed*) his Wools and his Farms.

And the third is, that so would Jesu my Master's Auditors would faithfully and plainly inform my Master of the truth of the yearly great damage he beareth in disbursing his money about Shipping and Boats, keeping an house up at Yarmouth to his great harm, and receiveth but chaffer and ware[1] for his corns and wools, &c. And then must abide a long day to make money, of such chaffer taking he shall never be monied, nor be answered clearly of his revenues yearly, but (*unless*) those things above said be amended betimes. In Lewis's days twelve years together my Master was

[1] He bartered instead of getting money.

wont to lay up money yearly at London and Caister, and now the contrary, *de malo in pejus*.

I dare not be known of this bill, but ye may question and fele of the disposition of these matters of others, and then understand if I write justly or no; and ye, as of your motion, for my Master's worship and profit, exhorting him, the Steward, Shipdam, and Spyrling to take a labour and a pain that this be reformed.

I pray you and require you keep this matter to yourself.

Your,
BOTONER.

As for novelties none cometh, but it is said the siege shall come to Calais; the Earl of Warwick is yet at Canterbury with the Archbishop, and the Earl's younger Brother is married to Sir Edmund Inglethorpe's daughter upon Saint Mark's day, the Earl of Worcester brought about the marriage; the Queen and the King at Hereford, the Lords Buckingham, Shrewsbury and others there; and now it is said Herbert shall come in (*submit*) and appear at Leicester before the King and the Lords, his life granted and goods, so he make amends to them he hath offended; many be indicted, some causelessly, which maketh Herbert's party stronger, and the Burgesses and Gentlemen about Hereford will go with the King, wife and child, but (*unless*) a peace be made ere the King part thence, for else Herbert and his affinity will acquit them (*pay them out*), as it is said.[1]

The Earl of Warwick hath had the folks of Canterbury and Sandwich before him, and thanked them of their good hearts, and victualling of Calais and prayeth them of continuance.

I send a bill of the names indicted, to my Master and you, to see and laugh at their Welsh names

[1] Sir William Herbert was a strong Yorkist, he now submits to King Henry, to avoid punishment; the gentlefolk of Hereford, his victims, say they will go away with the King unless a secure peace be made, for fear of Herbert taking revenge on them afterwards.

descended of old pedigrees. Our Lord be with you; written hastily at London, the first day of May.

BOTONER.

The second part of this Letter which concerns political matters refers to the year 1456, when the King was again under the management of the Queen and her party. They were at Hereford, pacifying Yorkists, while Warwick was securing the fleet and south-east ports for the Yorkists.

88. WINDSOR DESCRIBES W. WORCESTER (1458)

To my full special good Master, John Paston.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my full special good Master, after humble recommendation, please it you to understand, that [in] such service as I can do to your pleasure, as to mine understanding, I have showed my diligence now the short season since your departing, and in special, about such a Copy of a Foundation, as your mastership commanded me to get you a Copy of; of the which I send unto you at this time, by my Brother William Worcester, three Copies written by Luket, because I had no leisure, but so much business in setting forth of my Master of the Rolls; at this time, and in all this King's days, ye can have none other according [agreeing] any thing to your intent.

And as for the names of the Poles, William hath more writing than ye and I could find, found by labour made by him and me.

And also Sir, he hath caused me to examine old and many Records, written by some Frenchman concerning the Manor of Dedham, that was a cumberous labour, for these Copies were full defective, as it appeareth by the correcting of them.

Item, Sir, I may say to you, that William hath gone to School, to a Lumbard called Karoll Giles, to learn and to be read in Poetry, or else in French, for he hath been with the same Karoll every day two times or three; and hath bought divers Books of him, for the which as I suppose, he hath put himself in danger (*debt*) to the same Karoll.

I made a motion to William to have known part of his business, and he answered and said; that he would be as glad and as feyn of a good Book of French, or of Poetry as my Master Fastolf would be to purchase a fair manor; and thereby I understand, he list not to be communed withal in such matters, &c.

Item, Sir, as for any tidings, William can tell you, here at London are but full few, but Henry Bourchier is dead suddenly at Ludlow; my Lord of Canterbury and my Lord Bourchier shall be this week at Hunsdon, and hunt and sport them with Sir William Oldhall.

At this time, nothing else to your mastership, but and it please you to remember my Master at your best leisure, whether his old promise shall stand, as touching my preferring to the Boar's Head in Southwark[1]; Sir I would have been at another place, and of my Master's own motion, he said that I should set upon the Boar's Head, in the which matter I report me to William Worcester, Bokking and William Barker, and most specially to my Master's own remembrance; I know full well there can no conclusion be taken to mine avail without help of your mastership, unto the which I utterly submit me in this, and all other; and Our Lord Jesu preserve you and all yours, and send you your heart's desire with right.

Written at London on Sunday next after Saint Bartholomew's day in haste.

By your servant,
HENRY WINDSOR.

Worcester had complained of Fastolfe's incessant delay in settling his important affairs, had frequently urged Paston to come himself, *cf.* G. 315, 316. "At reverence of God, be as soon as ye may with my master to ease his spirits. He questioneth and disputeth with his servants here and will not be answered nor satisfied sometimes but after his wilfulness (*i.e.*, by having it his own way), for it sufficeth not our simple wits to appease his soul; but when he speaketh with Master Yelverton, you, or with William Jenney and such others as be authorised in the law, and with abundance of goods, he is content and holdeth him pleased with your answers and motions, as reason is that he be. So would Jesus one of you three, or some such other in your place, might hang at his girdle daily to answer his matters." (G. 316.)

[1] Presumably as manager, it was Fastolfe's property.

PUBL
DEPTFO

89. Fastolfe Dying (1459)

To my Master John Paston, Esq. be this Letter presented.

Jesu mercy.

Right reverend Master, &c. as soon as ye may goodly come to Caister, and Yelverton with you, and ye think it be to done, and send home your men and horses till ye have done here, &c. and by grace of God and your politic wisdom ye shall conclude more effectually in great matters of substance to my Master's and your worship and profit. It is high time, he draweth fast homeward, and is right low brought, and sore weaked and feebled &c. And ye must bring with you a form of a Supplication made at London, in what manner wise Master R. Popy, a cunning and a crafty man, shall present and purpose to the King for the amortising of Caister to Saint Bennet's, &c. which he promitted upon a certain money, &c. and undertook it, &c. and found [at] that time no bones in the matter, &c. And now he faith he will labour and ride and do his part, &c. and he would have me help him, &c. quod non fiet, &c. or else a man of credence of my Master's &c. quod dubito fieri, &c. God bring you soon hither, &c. for I am weary till ye come. Sir Thomas the parson your own most true, &c. by my truth, and I your Beadsman, and yours at your commandment, in your Letter have no more touched of the matter, &c. to my master, &c. Every day this five days he saith, "God send me soon my good Cousin Paston, for I hold him a faithful man, and ever one man,"[1] cui ego, "that is sooth, &c." et ille, "Shew me not the meat, shew me the man," hæc verba replicat sæpius cum magno stomacho, &c. Colinus Gallicus[2] dicit in Iernmuthia (*Yarmouth*) & aliis locis se esse executorem, &c. dixit etiam heri coram pluribus si semel fuerit Londinum nunquam vult videre Norfolciam, &c. dixit etiam ubi executores credunt se habituros claves, &c.

[1] Ever one man, always steadfast.

[2] "Probably W. Worcester" (F.); "probably Yelverton" (G.); but in this letter the name seems to fit neither (*cf.* l. 2.) Possibly John Bocking, *cf.* 406 in G.

post mortem allii habebunt claves, ita bene sicut illi, &c. falsissimus est & ego bene dixi in partem suam inter ipsum & me, &c. propter Deum faciatis Spirlyng venire juxta promissum in . . . . &c. Gallicus ipse maxime odit rectorem (Howes) & vellet supplantare eum, &c. Item valde desiderat suum, quietus est quia absit, &c.

Henricus Todynham continue aspirat post mortem magistri cum mille habeat oculos nocendi, &c. si quorum duos deperderit, nullus cæteros timeret, &c.

JOHN BRACKLEY.

90. FASTOLFE DEAD. THE PASTONS TAKE STEPS (1459)

To my Master, John Paston, in Norfolk.

RIGHT well beloved Brother, I recommend me to you, certifying you that on Friday last was in the morning Worcester and I were come to London by 8 of the clock, and we spake with my Lord Chancellor[1] and I found him well disposed in all things, and ye shall find him right profitable to you, &c.

And he desired me to write you a letter in his name, and put trust in you in gathering of the goods together, and pray you to do so, and have all his[2] goods out of every place of his, and his own place, where soever they were, and lay them secretly where as ye thought best at your assignment, and till that he speak with you himself, and he said ye should have all lawful favour.

I purpose to ride to him this day for Writs of *diem clausit extremum*,[3] and I suppose ye shall have a letter sent from him self to you.

As for the Goods of [*at* St.] Paul's they are safe enough, and this day we have grant to have the Goods

[1] Bishop Waynflete.

[2] Fastolfe's.

[3] This was a Writ which issued out of Chancery to the Escheator of the County, upon the death of any of the King's tenants in Capite, to enquire by a Jury of what lands he died seized, and of what value, and who was next heir to him. (F.)

out of Bermondsey [1] without advice of any man saving Worcester, Plomer, and I myself, and nobody shall know of it but we three.

My Lord Treasurer [2] speaketh fair, but yet many advise me to put no trust in him; there is laboured many means to intitle the King in his Goods. Southwell is Escheator, and he is right good and well disposed.

My Lord of Exeter claimeth title in my master's place with the appurtenances in Southwark [The Boar's Head], and verily had purposed to have entered, and his counsel were with us and spake with Worcester and me; and now afterwards they have sent us word that they would move my lord to sue by means of the law, &c.

I have spoken with my Lord of Canterbury, and Master John Stokes, and I find them right well disposed both, &c.

Item, to-morrow or the next day ye shall have another letter, for by that time we shall know more than we do now.

My Lord Chancellor would that my Master [Fastolfe] should be buried worshipfully, and one hundred marks alms done for him; but this day I shall wholly know his intent; Master John Stokes hath the same conceit and alms giving.

Harry Fylongley is not in this town, nor the Lord Beauchamp.

Item, we have gotten men of the Spiritual Law with holden with us (*on our side*), what case soever happen; we have Master Robert Kent; but in any wise have all the Goods there together, and tarry for no letting (*hindrance*), though ye should do it by day-light openly, for it is my Lord Chancellor's full intent that ye should do so.

As for William Worcester he trusteth verily ye would do for him (*reward him*) and for his avail and in reason, and I doubt not, and he may verily and faithfully understand you so disposed to him ward, ye shall find him faithful to you; in likewise I understand by him he will never have other master but his old

[1] An Abbey in Southwark, where some of his Goods were deposited. (F).
[2] James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond. Beheaded in 1461.

master, and to my conceit it were pity but if he should stand in such case by mine master that he should never need service, considering how my master trusted him, and the long years that he hath been with him in, and many a shrewd journey for his sake, &c.

I write you no more because ye shall [have] another letter written to morrow. Written at London the 12th day of November in haste.

By

WILLIAM PASTON.

91. BISHOP WAYNFLETE'S ADVICE (1459)

BE it remembered that for as much as Sir John Fastolf late deceased, of great affection hath put me in trust to be one of his Executors, and since it is desired [of] me to know my disposition herein, mine advice is thus, that first an Inventory be made wholly of his goods and chattels in all places, and that they be laid in sure ward by your discretions, till the Executors, or the most part of those that he put his great trust upon, speak with me, and make declaration to me of his last will, to the accomplishment whereof I will be special good Lord.

Furthermore, as touching his burying and month's mind[1] keeping, that it be done worshiply according to his degree, and for the health of his soul, and that Alms be given in Masses saying, and to poor people, to the sum of an hundred Marks till that otherwise we speak together; and I can agree right well that his servants have their rewards betimes according to his Will, to the intent that they may be better disposed, and to pray for the welfare of his soul; taking advice of a learned man in spiritual law, for no charge of administration till the Executors come together, or the most part, that his trust was most upon, to take the administration.

WILLIAM WINTON.

[1] The "Month's Mind" was a monthly solemnity in memory of the deceased, when prayers were offered, and alms given for the health of his Soul, &c. (F.)

BEDFORD'S CAPTAINS

(Many of the Duke of Bedford's captains became men of mark.)

Sir John Fastolfe (High Seneschal and Master of Bedford's household Governor of Maine and Anjou).

Sir Andrew Agarde (a Dane, Captain of Vire).

Sir William Oldhall.

Sir James Butler (succ. later as E. of Wilts and Ormond).

Sir John Bourchier (Lord Berners).

Sir John Hankford (Captain of the Bridge of Rouen).

Sir Richard Woodville (Steward of Rouen, father of Sir R. who married the widowed duchess).

Sir Bernard de Montferrant (a Gascon, whose son married Bedford' illegitimate daughter).

PART VI

PUBLIC EVENTS AND THEIR EFFECTS
(B) TO THE ACCESSION OF EDWARD I.
1459–1461

SUMMARY OF POLITICAL EVENTS, 1459-1461.

1458 (March 24), Love-day at St. Paul's. King Henry reconciles Percies and Nevilles, York and Somerset's heirs, Warwick and Clifford's heirs, etc.

1459 (April), King collects supporters at Leicester. The Queen and Prince collect support in Cheshire.

(Sept.) York collects support at Ludlow.

(Sept. 23) Salisbury, going to Ludlow, is attacked by the Queen's orders at Blore Heath.

York tells his troops Henry is dead.

(Oct. 12) Henry approaches Ludlow, Trollope deserts York, the rest fly to Calais or Ireland, Ludlow sacked by royalists.

(Nov.) Parliament of Coventry attaints Yorkists.

1460 (June), March, Salisbury and Warwick cross from Calais to Sandwich, are welcomed in Canterbury and London and pursue Henry to Northampton.

(July 10) Battle of Northampton, Grey of Ruthyn deserts Henry. Buckingham and other loyal peers slain. Moleyns surrenders the Tower. Scales murdered by the mob.

(Sept.) York arrives from Ireland, meets Parliament and claims the crown. Coventry Acts reversed. Compromise, York as heir.

The Queen and Prince fly to Wales and Scotland.

(Nov.) Somerset and Devon join Northern royalists in Yorkshire, York and Salisbury follow.

(Dec. 29) Battle of Wakefield, York and Salisbury slain.

1461 (Feb.), Edward defeats Pembroke in Wales. The Queen advances to St. Albans, defeats Warwick, and retakes Henry, who retires with the Queen to the North.

(March 4) Edward reaches London and is hailed King.

PART VI

92. At the Parliament of Coventry (Dec., 1459)

To my right worshipful Masters, William Yelverton Justice, John Paston, and Henry Filongly, and to each of them.

After the rout of the Duke of York and the submission of his troops to the Army of Henry VI., commanded by the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, near Ludlow, in October, 1459.

[Abridged]

Right worshipful Sirs, I recommend me to you, and like it you to know, that my Lord Chancellor is a right good and tender Lord in all your matters, and so will continue and my Lord Treasurer in like wise. . . . As for any particular matters, the Parliament, as yet, abideth upon the great matters of Attainder and Forfeiture; and so there be many, and diverse particular bills put in, but none ready, nor touching us, as nigh as we can harken. . . . The Chief Justice is right well and hearty, and sayeth full well and kindly of my Master, whom Jesu for his mercy pardon, and have you in his blessed governance. Written at Coventry the morrow after St. Nicholas. I came to this town of Coventry, such day sev'night as the parliament began; and as for such things as I could harken after, I send to William Worcester a great bill of tidings to shew you and all.

Yesterday in the morning, came in the Earl of Pembroke (Jasper Tudor) with a Good Fellowship; and the Duchess of York came yester evening late, as the Bringer hereof shall more plainly declare [to] you, to whom ye like to give credence.

The Bishop of Exeter [G. Neville] and the Lord Grey *of* Ruthin have declared them full worshipfully to the King's great pleasure.

Playters and I [have] written you a Letter by Norff, Yeoman for the King's mouth.

Your,

JOHN BOKKING.

The following List of those of the Duke of York's Party who were attainted by Parliament is pinned to the above Letter. (F.)

The Duke of York.	Countess of Salisbury.	
his sons the Earl of March and the Earl of Rutland.	Sir Thomas Neville. Sir John Neville.	Sir William Oldhall. Edward Bourchier.
(R. Neville) the Earl of Warwick.	Sir Thos. Haryngton.	John Denham (and eight others).
(R. Neville) the Earl of Salisbury.	Sir Thos. a Parre.	
The Lord Powys.	Sir John Conyers.	As for the Lord Powys,
The Lord Clinton.	Sir John Wenlock.	he come in (*surrendered*) and had grace as for his life, but as for his goods, the forfeiture passed.

[As nearly all of the above were out of reach they lived to fight again and the forfeiture of their property to the Crown lasted but for a few months.]

93. THE WOODVILLES CAUGHT AT SANDWICH BY YORKISTS (Jan., 1460)

To the Right Worshipful Sir, John Berneye, Esquire, at Castre being.

RIGHT Worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you. *(Here follow Complaints against Fryer Brakley, &c. concerning Sir John Fastolf's interment, affairs, &c., &c.)*

As to tydings here, I send some off hand, written to you and others, how the Lord Rivers, Sir Anthony his Son, and others, have *won Calais* (*been taken thither*), by a feeble assault made at Sandwich by [John] Denham, Esquire, with the number of eight hundred men, on Tuesday between four and five o'clock in the morning. But my Lady Duchess [of York] is still again received in Kent. The Duke of York is at Dublin, strengthened

with his Earls and Homagers as ye shall see by a bill. God send the King victory of his Enemies, and rest and peace amongst his Lords.

Your,

W. BOTONER, called WYRCESTER.

94. THE YORKIST EARLS AND LORD RIVERS[1] (Jan., 1460)

To his right worshipful Brother, John Paston, be this Letter delivered.

AFTER due recommendation had, Please you to wete, that we came to London upon the Tuesday by noon next after our departure from Norwich, and sent our men to enquire after my Lord Chancellor, and Mr. John Stokes, and Malmesbury. And as for my Lord Chancellor he was departed from London, and was rode to the King two days ere we were come to London; and as we understand, he hasted him to the King, because of my Lord Rivers being taken at Sandwich, &c.

(*Then follows a long Account of private Business, which is here omitted.*)

As for Tidings, my Lord Rivers was brought to Calais, and before the Lords with eight score torches, and there my Lord of Salisbury rated him, calling him; "Knave's Son, that he should be so rude to call him, and these other Lords Traytors[2]; for they should be found the King's true Liege men, when he should be found a Traytor, &c."

And my Lord of Warwick rated him, and said "that his Father was but a Squire, and brought up with King Henry V. and since, [he had] made himself by marriage, and also made a Lord; and that it was not his part to have such language of Lords, being of the King's Blood."

And my Lord of March [*afterwards Edward IV.*] rated him in like wise.

[1] Sir R. Woodville, husband of the dowager Duchess of Bedford.

[2] *I.e.*, at the Coventry Parliament.

And Sir Anthony[1] was rated for his language of all the three Lords in like wise.

Item, the King cometh to London ward, and as it is said [calls up] the people as he come; but it is certain there be commissions made into diverse Shires, that every man be ready, in his best array, to come, when the King send for him.

Item, my Lord Roos is come from Guisnes.

No more, but we pray to Jesu have you in his most merciful keeping. Amen.

Written at London the Monday next after Saint Paul's Day.

Your Brother,
WILLIAM PASTON.

95. AFTER THE BATTLE OF NORTHAMPTON (YORKIST VICTORY, Oct., 1460)

To the right worshipful Sir and Master, John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, be this Letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and Master, I recommend me unto you; please you to weet, the Monday after our Lady day there come hither, to my Master's place, my Master Bowser, Sir Harry Ratford, John Clay, and the Harbinger of my Lord of March, desiring that my Lady of York might lie (*stay*) here until the coming of my Lord of York, and her two Sons, my Lord George, and my Lord Richard, and my Lady Margaret her Daughter, which I granted them in your name to lie here until Michaelmas.

And she had not lain here two days but she had tidings of the landing of my Lord (*Duke of York*) at Chester.

The Tuesday next after, my Lord sent for her that she should come to him to [Hereford] and thither she is gone; and she hath left here both the Sons, and the

[1] Sir Anthony Woodville, Rivers' eldest son. See Appendix I.

Daughter, and the Lord of March cometh every day to see them.

Item, my Lord of York hath diverse strange Commissions from the King, for to sit in diverse towns coming homeward; that is to say, in Ludlow, Shrewsbury, Hereford, Leicester, Coventry, and in other diverse Towns, to punish them by the (*for their*) faults to the King's Laws.

As for tidings here, the King is away at Eltham and at Greenwich to hunt, and to sport him there biding (*until*) the Parliament, and the Queen and the Prince abideth in Wales always, and [there] is with her the Duke of Exeter, and others with a few meny (*followers*) as men say here.

And the Duke of Somerset he is in Depe (*Dieppe*) and with him Master John Ormond, Whittingham, Andrew Trollop, and other diverse of the Garrison of Guisnes, under the King of France's safe conduct, and they say here, he purpose him to go to Wales to the Queen. And the Earl of Wiltshire is still in peace at Ottery [Devon] at the Fryers, which is Sanctuary.

Item, Colbine is come home to my Master's place, and saith, that at your departing out of London, ye sent him word that he should come hither to the place, and be here until your coming again, and so he is here yet, and saith he will take no Master but by your advice; nevertheless [he] awaiteth upon Master Oldhall the most part . . . at his place.

Item, Master Poynings hath entered on a two or three places upon the Earl of Northumberland,[1] and he standeth in good grace of the King, my Lord of March, my Lord Warwick, and my Lord of Salisbury; most part of the Country about his livelihood holdeth with him; and my Mistress your sister is not delivered as yet, God give her good deliverance.

No more to you at this time, but and ye will command me any service I may do, it is ready, and Jesu

[1] Had taken possession of some of the lands claimed by the Earl of Northumberland; he being a Lancastrian, the Yorkist Earls now favour Poynings.

have you in his blessed keeping; and I beseech you, this Letter may commend me to my Mistress your Mother, and my Mistress your wife, and all your household.

Written at London,[1] the 12th day of October.

Your own Servant,

CHRISTOPHER HANSSON.

The King was in the hands of the three Earls; March, Salisbury, and Warwick, but the Queen and Prince had escaped.

96. FEELING IN NORFOLK (1459 or 1460)

To my right worshipful Husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, pleaseth it you to weet that I received your Letter, that ye sent me by Nicholas Colman on Sunday last past; and as for the matter that ye desired me to break of to my Cousin Rookwood, it fortuned so that he came to me on Sunday to dinner, soon after that I had your Letter, and when we had dined, I moved to him thereof in covert terms, as Playters shall inform you hereafter; and as I thought by him, and so did Playters also, by the language that he had to us, that he would be as faithful as he could or might be to that good Lord that ye wrote of, and to you also, in any thing that he could or might do, in case were that he were set in office so that he might ought do, and thereto he said he would be bound in a 1000*l.* and (*if*) he were so much worth.

As for the other, that ye desired I should move to of the same matter, me seemeth he is too young to take any such things upon him, and also I know verily that he shall never love faithfully the other man, that ye desired that he should do for, when he remembereth the time that is past, and therefore I spake not to him thereof.

This day was holden a great day at Acle before the Under Sheriff and the Under Escheator of the matter

[1] Probably from Fastolfe's town house in Southwark, now claimed by Paston.

of Sir John Fastolf's Lands, and there was my Cousin Rookwood, and my Cousin John Berney, of Reedham, and divers other gentlemen, and thrifty men of the country, and the matter is well sped after your intent, blessed be God! as ye shall have knowledge of in haste.

I suppose Playters shall be with you on Sunday or on Monday next coming if he may; ye have many good prayers of the poor people that God should speed you at this Parliament, for they live in hope that ye should help to set a way that they might live in better peace in this Country than they had done before, and that Wools should be purveyed for,[1] that they should not go out of this land, as it hath been suffered to do before, and then shall the poor people live more better than they have done by their occupation therein. Thomas Bone hath sold all your Wool here for 20*d.* a stone, and good surety found to you therefore to be paid at Michaelmas next coming, and it is sold right well after that (*considering*) the wool was for the most part right feeble.

Item, there be bought for you three horses at Saint Faith's Fair,[2] and all be trotters, right fair horses, God save them, and they be well keeped.

Item, your Mills at Hellesdon be let for twelve marks (8*l.*) and the Miller to find the reparation; and Richard Calle hath let all your lands at Caister, but as for Mawtby lands they be not let yet. William White hath paid me again this day his 10*l.* and I have made him an acquittance thereof, because I had not his obligation.

There is great talking in this country of the desire of my Lord of York [for the Crown], the people report full worshipfully of my Lord of Warwick, they have no fear here but that he and other should shew too great favour to them that have been rulers of this country before time [*i.e.* Tuddenham, etc.].

[1] We find by this Letter that the exportation of wool was an hardship upon the poor who by that means were deprived of work in that branch of the manufacture which affected their spinning, &c. (F.)

[2] There is at this time [1785] a considerable Fair at this place. (F.)

I have done all your errands to Sir Thomas Howes that ye wrote to me for; I am right glad that ye have sped well in your matters betwixt Sir Philip Wentworth and you, and so I pray God ye may do in all other matters to his pleasance.

As for the writings that ye desired that Playters should send you, Richard Calle told me that they were at Harry Barber's, at the Temple Gate.

The Mayor and the Mayoress sent hither their dinners this day, and John Damme came with them, and they dined here; I am beholden to them for they have sent to me divers times since ye went hence; the Mayor saith that there is no gentleman in Norfolk that he would do more for than he would for you, if it lay in his power to do for you.

J. Piers is still in prison, but he will not confess more than he did when ye were at home. Edmund Brome was with me, and told me that Piers sent for him for to come and speak with him, and he told me that he was with him and examined him, but he would not be a knowe (*acknowledge*) to him, that he had no knowledge where no goods was of his Master's (*John Berney the elder, lately dead*) more than he had knowledged to you; he told me that he sent for him to desire him to labour to you and to me for him if ye had been at home; and he told me, that he said to him again, that he would never labour for him but he might know that he were true to his Master, though it lay in his power to do right much for him; I suppose it should do none harm though the said Perse were removed further. I pray to God give grace that the truth may be known, and that the dead may have part of his own goods,[1] and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written in haste, at Hellesdon, the Tuesday next after Saint Luke (15 *Oct.*).

By yours

MARGARET PASTON.

[1] Doubtless spent on masses for his soul. The Berneys were followers of Fastolfe's, military men.

97. Piers in prison

To my right worshipful Sir Robert Rokesby.

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your good mastership, that ye will vouchsafe to speak to Richard Kowven, that he might bring me or send me the money that is between him and me in all the haste that he may, for in good faith I had never more need for to have help of my good, as I have at this time, for God wot it stands right strange with me, for the false Gaoler that keepeth me entreateth me worse than it were a Dog, for I am fettered worse than ever I was, and manacled on the hands both day and night, for he is afraid of me for breaking away; he maketh false tales of me, through the means of a false Quean that was tending to a Frenchman that is prisoner to my Lord Roos, and for because of that he bronde (*upbraideth*) me every day by John of Berney, that is gone to the other Lords,[1] but I trust to God once to quit him his meed; and Sir I thank you mickle (*much*) of that ye have done for me or said, and Sir I shall deserve it against you, by the grace of God, for I feythe (*in faith*) I am beholden to you more than to all men that ever I found since I came in prison.

No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

By your Servant and Beadsman,

Perse.

98. The Earl of Oxford breaks the Bishop's Prison [1460-61 ?]

To the Right Reverend and Worshipful Sir John Paston, sometime Lord of Gresham, and now Farmer thereof, as it is said.

[An insulting address.]

Piers of Leigh came to Lynn upon Christmas even in the freshest wise; and there he dined, so as was;

[1] The Yorkists, now victorious; Oxford and Roos were Lancastrian.

but when my Lord of Oxenford heard hereof, he, with his fellowship, and such as I and other your prisoners, came riding unto Lynn, and even unto the Bishop's gaol, where the said Perys dined with other of his fellowship. My Lord pulled him out of the said gaol, and made to cast him upon an horse, and tied an halter by his arm, and so led him forth like himself; and even forthwith the said Bishop, the Mayor, and other their fellowship, met with my said Lord and your prisoners, and also the said Perys tied by an halter. The Bishop having these words unto my Lord, with his pillion in his hands, "My Lord, this is a prisoner, ye may know by his tippet and staff; what will you have with him?" Thereto my Lord said, "He is my prisoner now." Whereto the Bishop said, "Where is your warrant or commission?" Thereto my Lord said, "I have warrant sufficient to me." And thus they departed, the Mayor and all the Commonalty of Lynn keeping their silence.

But when we were gone, and Perys of Leigh fast in Rising Castle, then the gates of Lynn, by the Bishop's commandment, were fast spered (*bolted*), and kept with men of arms; and then the Bishop and his squires rebuked the Mayor of Lynn, and said that he had shamed both him and his town for ever; with much other language, &c.

The Bishop should have kept his Christmas at Gaywood, but yet he comes not out of Lynn; in faith, my Lord [Oxford] did quit him as courageously as ever I wist man do. The Bishop came to the town with sixty persons the same time, and made to spere the gates after him; but when we met, there abode not with him over twelve persons at the most, with his serjeant of arms, which serjeant was fain to lay down his mace, and so at the same gates we came in we went out, and no blood drawn, God be thanked.

If ye will anything that I may do, send me word; it shall be done to my power, &c.

Commend me to my mistress, your wife, &c.; and if

ye dare jeopardy your surety of an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) I shall come and see you, and else have me excused for, &c.

From your own
JOHN DOWBIGGYNG.

The last sentence appears to be a threat, and Dowbigging may be a pseudonym. Paston had decided to become a Yorkist supporter. Piers was a servant of John Berney, and in custody because suspected of hiding money, etc., of his dead master. He was delivered in Jan., 1462, by the general pardon proclaimed by Edward IV., and betook himself to Margaret Paston. "God wote in an evil plight" (G, No. 505). He became Paston's servant. Rising was a royal castle then.

99. AFTER THE BATTLE OF WAKEFIELD

To his Right Worshipful Brother, John Paston.

[Lancastrian victory, Dec. 31st, 1460; but the King, in London, was in Warwick's hands. North against South.]

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Brother, I recommend [me] to you, certifying you that your letter was delivered me the 23d day of January about the noon season, and Richard Calle rode in the morning, and therefore I broke your Letter, if (*lest*) there were any after matter; and I did (*made*) Christopher Hanson go to my Lord of Canterbury to tell him, as your letter rehearsed; and my Lord said, he had spoken with your man thereof the day before, and if the Bishop of Norwich would not do so much for him, he is the less beholden to him; notwithstanding, he said, he would save you harmless against John Young; but and ye do well, remember, This Lord have many matters to think on, and if it be forgotten the harm is yours; also if the world turn[1] John Young will not do at his prayer.

And my Lord Fitzwalter is ridden northwards, and it is said, in my Lord of Canterbury's house, that he hath taken 200 of Andrew Trollop's men. And as for

[1] If the Yorkists get the upper hand again.

Colt, and Sir James Strangwyse, and Sir Thomas Pykering, they be taken or else dead; the common voice is, that they be dead.

Hopton and Hastyngs be with the Earl of March and were not at the Field [of Wakefield].

What word, that every one have from my Lords that be here (*Warwick & Yorkists*), it is well done, and best for you to see, that the Country be always ready to come both footmen and horsemen, when they be sent for; for I have heard said, the farther Lords (*Edward, and other Yorkists then in Wales*) will be here sooner than men ween, I have heard said, ere three weeks to an end; and also that ye should come with more men, and cleanlier arrayed than any other man of your Country should; for it lie the more upon your worship, and toucheth you more near than other men of your country, and also ye be more had in favour with my Lords here. In this Country every man is well willing to go with my Lords here, and I hope God shall help them, for the People in the North rob, and steal, and be appointed to pill all this country, and give away mens Goods and Livelyhoods, in all the South Country, and that will ask a mischief. My Lords, that be here, have as much as they may do to keep down all this Country, more than four or five shires (*London and the Home Counties?*), for they would be up on the men in the North, for it is for the weal of all the South. I pray you recommend me to my Mother, and that I prayed her of her blessing; I pray you excuse me to her, that I write her no letter, for this was enough to do. I dare not pray you to recommend me to my Sister your wife, and the messenger I trow be so wise he can not do it. Ye must pay him for his labour, for he tarried all night in this town for this letter.

Written the 23d day of January in haste, when I was not well at ease. God have [you] in his keeping.

By CLEMENT PASTON,
Your Brother.

At this time Henry VI. was a prisoner in London; Edward, not yet King, in Wales.

100. Fear of the Queen's Northern Army in Norfolk (March, 1461)

A Letter to John Paston, Esquire, from his Wife.

Written between the battles of Wakefield and 2nd St. Albans.

Please it you to weet that it is let me weet by one that oweth you good will, that there is laid await upon you in this Country, if ye come here at large, to bring you to the presence of such a Lord in the North as shall not be for your ease, but to jeopardy of your life, or great and importable loss of your goods; and he that hath taken upon him this enterprize now, was Under Sheriff to Giles Saintlowe; he hath great favour hereto by the means of the Son of William Baxter that lieth buried in the Grey Friars; and as it is reported the said Son hath given great Silver to the Lords in the North to bring the matter about, and now he and all his old fellowship put out their sins, and are right flygge (*ripe*) and merry, hoping all thing is and shall be as they will have it; also it is told me that the father of the bastard in this Country (*Heydon?*) said that now should this Shire be made sure for him and his heirs, and for the Baxter's heirs also, whereby I conceive they think that they have none enemy but you, &c.

Wherefore like it you to be the more wary of your guiding for your person's safe-guard, and also that ye be not too hasty to come into this Country till ye hear the world more sure. I trow the bearer of this shall tell more by mouth, as he shall be informed of the rule in this Country. God have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the second Sunday of Lent, by candle light at even.

By yours, &c.,

Margaret Paston.

101. Between two Kings

[This Letter is without either Date, Name, or Direction lest some one of the Lancastrian party should get possession of the letter and so discover the sentiments of the Pastons respecting public affairs. (Fenn.)]

I RECOMMEND me to you, and let you weet, that notwithstanding tidings come down as ye know, that people should not come up till they were sent for, but to be ready at all times; this notwithstanding, most people out of this Country (*Norfolk*) have taken wages, saying, they will go up to London [1]; but they have no Captain nor Ruler assigned by the Commissioners to await upon, and so they straggle about by themselves, and by likeliness, are not like to come at London half of them; and men that come from London say, there have not passed Thetford not passing 400; and yet the Towns and the Country that have waged them shall think they be discharged (*have done their share*); and therefore if these Lords above wait after more people in this Country, by likeliness it will not be easy to get without a new Commission, and Warning, and yet it will be thought right strange, of them that have waged people, to wage any more, for every town hath waged, and sent forth, and are ready to send forth, as many as they did, when the King [Henry VI?] sent for them before the field at Ludlow [2]; and they that are not gone, be going in the same form.

Item, there was shrewd (*bad*) rule toward in this Country, for there was a certain person forthwith after the Journey (sm. *fight*) at Wakefield gathered Fellowship to have murdered John Damme, as is said.

And also there is at the Castle of Rising, and in other two places made great gathering of People, and hiring of Harness, and it is well understood, they be not

[1] The towns and the shire raised soldiers, when ordered by a Commission of Array, and paid their wages.

[2] Battle at Mortimer's Cross near Ludlow, 2nd of February, 1461, between Edward, then Duke of York, and the Lancastrians under Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, who were routed. (F.) The ambiguity, as to which King, is intentional. Rising was a royal castle hitherto held by Oxford.

to the King-ward (*Edward IV.?*), but rather the contrary, and for to rob.

Wherefore my Father is in a doubt, whether he shall send my Brother up or not, for he would have his own men about him, if need were here; but notwithstanding, he will send up Dawbeney, his Spear, and Bows with him; as Stapleton and Calthorp or other men of worship of this Country agree to do; wherefore demean you in doing of your Errands thereafter; and if ye shall bring any message from the [Yorkist] Lords, take writing, for Darcort's message is not verily believed, because he brought no writing.

Item, this country would fain take these false Shrews (*disloyal intriguers*), that are of an opinion contrary to the King, and his Council, if they had any authority from the King to do so.

Item, my Brother is rode to Yarmouth for to let Bribers (*hinder plunderers*) that would have robbed a Ship under colour of my Lord of Warwick, and belong nothing to them-ward.

JOHN PASTON
(*the youngest*).

102. NEWS OF TOWTON (OR SAWSTON MOOR) (April, 1461)

To my Master John Paston in haste.

PLEASE you to know and weet of such tidings, as my Lady of York hath by a Letter of Credence, under the sign manual of our Sovereign Lord King Edward; which Letter came unto our said Lady this same day Eastern Even at xj o'clock, and was seen and read by me Will^m^ Paston.

First, Our Sovereign Lord hath won the field; and upon the Monday next after Palm Sunday, he was [received] into York with great Solemnity and Processions. And the Mayor and Commons of the said City

made their means to have grace by Lord Montagu, and Lord Berners,[1] which before the King's coming into the said City, desired him of grace for the said City, which granted them grace.

On the King's part is slain Lord Fitzwalter, and Lord Scroop sore hurt; John Stafford, Horne of Kent be dead, and Humphrey Stafford and William Hastyngs made Knights with others; Blount is knighted, &c.

On the [contrary] part is dead Lord Clifford, Lord Nevyle, Lord Welles, Lord Wylloughby, Anthony Lord Scales, Lord Harry, . . . the Earl of Northumberland, Andrew Trollop with many others, gentle and commons, to the number of twenty thousand.

Item, King Harry, the Queen, the Prince, Duke of Somerset, Duke of Exeter, Lord Roos be fled into Scotland, and they be chased and followed, &c. We send no ere (*no sooner*) unto you because we had none certain till now; for unto this day London was as sorry City as might [be]; and because Spordams had no certain tidings, we thought ye should take them a worth (*as you would*) till more certain.

Item, Thorp Waterfield is yielded as Spordams can tell you.

And Jesu speed you; we pray you that this tidings my Mother may know.

By your Brother,
W. PASTON.
TH. PLAYTERS.

103. AFTER TOWTON

To my Master, John Paston, Esquire.

PLEASE your Mastership to weet, that I have spoken with Essex, in the matter that ye weet of, and find him by his talking well disposed. . . .

Item, as for tidings, it is noised and told for truth of men of worship, and others, that the Earl of Wiltshire is taken, Doctor Morton, and Doctor Makerell, and be brought to the King at York. Master William also

[1] John Neville, Lord Montagu; Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners.

spoke with a man that saw them. Item, Sir I hear of Sir John Borceter and Christopher Hanson that Harry the Sixth is in a place in Yorkshire is called Coroumber, such a name it hath, or much like (*? error for Kirkcudbright*).

And there is Siege laid about, and divers Esquires of the Earl of Northumberland have gathered them together a five or six thousand men, to bicker with (*interrupt*) the siege, that in the mean while Harry the Sixth might have been stolen away at a little Postern on the back side; at which Bicker (*Fight*) be slain four thousand men of the North. Sir Robert Ogle and Conyers [1] lyeth the siege on our side, and they it is that have done this act. Some say the Queen, Somerset, and the Prince should be there. Item, it is talked now for truth, the Earl of Northumberland is dead. Item, the Earl of Devonshire is dead justly (*just now*). Item, my Lord Chancellor is to York. Item, the King and the Lords come not here before Whitsuntide, as it is said.

Item, Sir, soon upon the Chief Baron's coming I shall send you a Letter with God's Grace, who preserve you, and have you in his blessed keeping.

Your,

THOMAS PLAYTERS.

At Cockermouth was the Earl of Wiltshire taken, and these other Doctors. Item, some men talk Lord Welles, Lord Wylloughby, and Scales be on live (*alive*).

Item, Sir Robert Veer [2] is slain in Cornwall, as it is told for truth.

104. EDWARD IV. OFFERS A KNIGHTHOOD (1461)

To my right good Master, John Paston, in all haste.

AFTER my most special Recommendation, Please your Mastership weet; the King, because of the Siege of Carlisle [by the Scots], changed his day of Coronation to be upon the Sunday next after Saint John Baptist, to the intent to speed him Northward in all haste. And how be it, blessed be God, that he hath now good tidings,

[1] See Appendix I. [2] Brother of 13th Earl of Oxford.

that Lord Montagu hath broken the Siege, and slain of Scotts six thousand, and two Knights, whereof Lord Clifford's brother is one; yet notwithstanding he will be crowned the said Sunday.

And John Jeney informed me, and as I have verily learned sithen, ye are inbilled to be made a Knight at this Coronation; whether ye have understanding before hand, I wot not; but and it like you to take the worship upon you, considering the comfortable tidings aforesaid, and for the gladness and pleasure of all your Wellwillers, and to the pine and discomfort of all your Ill willers, it were time your gear necessary on that behalf were purveyed for; and also ye had need hie you to London, for as I conceive the Knights should be made upon the Saturday before the Coronation. And as much as may be purveyed for you in secret wise without cost I shall bespeak for you, if need be, against your coming, in trust of the best; nevertheless if ye be disposed, ye had need send a man before in all haste, that nothing be to seek. William Calthorp is inbilled, and Yelverton is inbilled, which caused Markham, because Yelverton looked to have been Chief Judge, and Markham thinketh to please him thus. And as for the matter against Pontrell, we can no farther proceed till we have my Master your Father's Testament; I sent my Mistress a Letter for it. No more, but I pray Almighty Jesu have you in his keeping.

Your,

THOMAS PLAYTER.

Paston declined the knighthood for himself, but his eldest son had it and went to court.

105. ANXIETY AFTER EDWARD IV.'S ACCESSION (July, 1461)

To my right noble and worshipful Mistress my Mistress Paston, or to William Paston if she be absent.

RIGHT noble and worshipful mistress I recommend me to you with my poor service, and for so much as I hear nothing of my master your husband's coming hastily

home, and though he come, or come not, it were expedient that the King were informed of the demeaning of the shire, therefore I send to you a testimonial which is made by a great assent of great multitude of Commons to send to the King; I pray you for the good speed thereof, that in all haste possible ye like to send it to my said master, if he be with the King, else find the mean to send it to the King though my master be thence; beside forth that ye vouchsafe to let diligent labour be made to a sufficient number to seal for my master alone, for if both hold not, I would one held.

I pray you that it like you to send for my master William Paston, and shew him all this, and that it were hasted, for, on the Adversary's part, Judas sleepeth not.

Berney promised to have sent, but for our Lord's love trust not that, for I see his sloth and silly labour, which is no labour, and I would full fain speak with you, &c.

My master, your husband, will peradventure blame us all, if this matter be not applied, for he may not of reason do so largely herein by his might, because he is elected as the Commons might wisely do with help of his favour, if it were wisely wrought. If my master William Paston ride hastily within ten days to London, I will with him, if he send me word. The Holy Trinity preserve you.

Written rudely in haste the Sunday, &c.

Men say, send a wiseman on thy errand and say little to him, wherefore I write briefly and little.

THOMAS DENYES.

A few days later Denys was murdered by a party of enemies, Lancastrians.

106. DISPUTED ELECTION IN NORFOLK

To my Cousin [slip for *wife*] *Margaret Paston.*

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that the Under Sheriff doubteth him (*is suspicious*) of John Berney, wherefore I pray you bring them together, and let them accord if ye can, so that the said Under Sheriff be sure that he shall not be hurt by him nor of his countrymen;

and if he (*Berney*) will not, let him verily understand, that he shall be compelled to find him surety of the peace to agree on this head, and that shall neither be profitable nor worshipful; and let him weet that there have been many complaints of him by that knavish Knight Sir Miles Stapylton, as I sent you word before, but he shall come to his excuse well enough so he have a man's heart.[1] And the said Stapylton shall be understood as he is, a false shrew, and he and his wife and other have blavered (*prated*) here of my kindred in hoder moder (*hugger-mugger, clandestinely*), but, by that time we have reckoned of old days and late days, mine shall be found more worshipful than his and his wife's, or else I will not for his gilt gypcer (*purse*).

Also tell the said Berney that the Sheriff is in a doubt whether he shall make a new election of Knights of the Shire, because of him and Grey, wherein it were better for him to have the Sheriff's good will.

Item, me thinketh for quiet of the Country it were most worshipful, that as well Berney as Grey should get a record of all such that might spend forty Shillings a year (*i.e. the voters*), that were at the day of election, which of them that had fewest to give it up as reason would. Written at London, on Relick Sunday.[2]

Item, that ye send about for Silver according to the old bill that I sent you from Lynn.

JOHN PASTON.

107. VIOLENCE STILL PREVALENT (July, 1461)

Margaret Paston, to John Paston.

[Denys was believed to have been murdered by the parson of Snoring and others.]

I RECOMMEND me to you, please you to weet that I have sent to my Cousin Berney, according to your desire in the Letter that ye did write on Relick Sunday to me, whereupon he hath written a letter to you and another bill to me, the which I send you. He told the

[1] John Berney the younger was suspected of being a coward.
[2] Sunday following the translation of Sir Thomas à Becket, 7 July.

messenger that I sent to him, that the Under Sheriff needeth not to fear him nor none of his, for he said, after the Election was done, he spake with him at the Grey Friars, and prayed him of his good mastership, and said to him that he feared no man of bodily harm, but only Twyer and his fellowship.

Item, Sir John Tatersalle, and the Bailiff of Walsingham, and the Constable, hath taken the parson of Snoring and four of his men, and set them fast in the stocks on Monday at night; and as it is said they should be carried up to the King in haste; God defend it but they be chastised as the law will. Twyer and his fellowship beareth a great weight of Thomas Denys' death in the Country about Walsingham, and it is said there, if John Osbern had ought him as good will, as he did before that he was acquainted with Twyer, he should not have died, for he might [have] ruled all Walsingham as he had list, as it is said.

Item, William Lynys that was with Master Fastolf, and such other as he is with him, go fast about in the Country and bear men a hand (*accuse people*), priests and other, they be Scots, and take bribes of them and let them go again. He took the last week the parson of Fritton, and but for my Cousin Jernyngham the younger, they would have led him forth with them, and he told them plainly if they made any such doings there, but they had the Letter to shew for them, they should have a laid on their bodies (*beaten them*); it were well done that they were met with by times. It is told me that the said William reporteth of you as shamefully as he can in divers places. Jesu have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Wednesday after Relick Sunday.

If the Under Sheriff come home I will assay to do for him as ye desired me in your Letter; as for money, I have sent about, and can get none but 13*s.* 4*d.* since ye went out; I will do my part to get more as hastily as I may.

By your,
MARGARET PASTON.

108. Berney wants a Royal Letter (1461)

To the Worshipful John Paston, and to my Cozen William Rokewode, Esquire, with my Lord of Canterbury.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, praying you heartily to labour for that the King may write unto me, giving me thanks of the good will and service that I have done unto him, and in being with him against his adversaries and rebellions, as well in the North, as in this Country of Norfolk. And in that the King should please the Commons in this Country; for they grudge and say, how that the King receiveth such of this Country, &c., as have been his great Enemies, and Oppressors of the Commons; and such as have assisted his Highness, be not rewarded; and it is to be considered, or else it will hurt as me seemeth by reason; and in aid of this changeable Rule, it were necessary to move the good Lords Spiritual and Temporal, by the which it might be reformed, &c. And in case that any of mine old Enemies Tudenham, Stapylton, and Heydon,[1] with their affinity, labour the King and Lords unto my hurt; I am and will be ready to come to my Sovereign Lord for my excuse; so that I may come safe for unlawful hurt, purveyed by my said Enemies. No more at this time, but God preserve you in grace. Written at Witchingham, the 16th day in the month of July, in the 1st year of the reign of Edward IV.

JOHN BERNEYE.

A fresh election being held, John Paston was again returned.

109. An Attempt by the County to get Justice done (July, 1461)

To my worshipful Husband John Paston, this Letter be delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that I am desired by Sir John

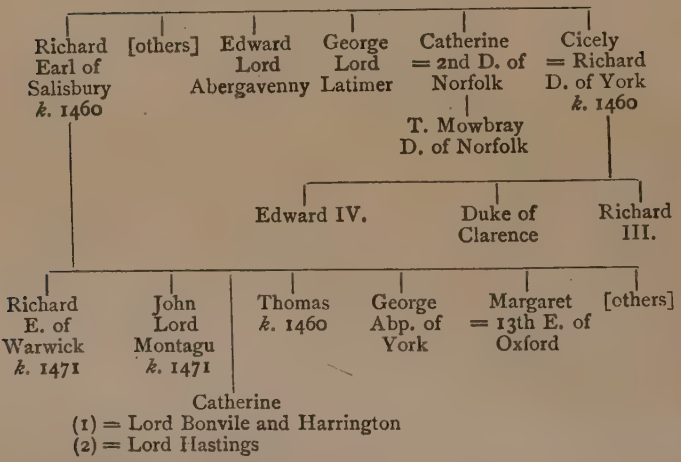
[1] The same gang of "maintainers" who terrorised Norfolk before the Civil War. Tuddenham was executed, being a Lancastrian, 1462. Stapleton died 1466. Heydon, a lawyer, flourished till his death in 1481.

Tatersalle to write to you for a commission, or an Oyer and Terminer, for to be sent down into this country to sit upon the Parson of Snoring, and on such as was cause of Thomas Denys' death, and for many and great horrible Robberies; and as for the costs thereof the country will pay therefore, for they be sore afraid, but the said death be chastised, and the said Robberies, they are afraid that more folks shall be served in like wise. As for the Priest and six of his men that be taken, they be delivered to Twyer, and four be with them of the Country's cost, for to be sent with to the King; and if they be brought up, at the reverence of God, do your part that they escape not but that they may have the judgment of the law and as they have deserved, and be committed to prison not to depart till they be enquired of their foresaid robbery by such a commission that ye can get, that the King and the Lords may understand what rule they have been of, not only for the Murders and the Robberies, but as well for the great insurrection that they were like a made (*to have made*) within the Shire. The Priests of Caister they be straitly take heed at by Robert Harmerer and other, so that the said Priests may have nothing out of their own nor of other mens, but they be ransacked, and the place is watched both by day and night; the Priests think right long till they (*have*) tidings from you. At the reverence of God beware how ye go and ride, for it is told me that ye be threatened of them that be naughty fellows, that hath been inclining to them that hath been your old Adversaries.

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Saturday next before Saint Margaret (20 *July*).

By your,
MARGARET PASTON.

THE NEVILLE CONNECTION



PART VII

JOHN PASTON'S STRUGGLE FOR THE FASTOLFE INHERITANCE, 1461–1466

[With the help of Howes, Worcester, and others, Paston took possession of Caister, Hellesdon, Cotton, and other places, and established priests at Caister; but other executors sold Caister to the Duke of Norfolk, and Hellesdon to the Duke of Suffolk, and they forcibly seized the property. Paston secured the favour of Edward IV. by a financial transaction (*cf.* G. 473 and Vol. I., p. 206 *note*) and that of the Bourchiers, but the Dukes and Sir John Howard were stronger in Norfolk, Edward dared not offend them. Paston's second son, John, was placed in Norfolk's household in the vain hope of winning favour.]

PART VII

110. The Executors not very Charitable (31st Jan., 1461)

Amicabili magistro nostro Johanni Paston Armigero.

Full reverend and worshipful, after all due reverence and recommendation, your poor Priest beseecheth humbly it please your good Mastership to understand by this simple bill, that on the Friday next after the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul last past, I was at your place at Caister to have told you what answer I had of Sir Thomas Howes, parson of Blofield, and in as much as ye were not at home, I told it to my mistress your wife, and God thank her of her gentleness, she made me great cheer; and moreover advised me to send you a bill thereof to London. This was his answer, when I had talked to him as I could, in like wise as ye advertised me to do; he answered again in these words, "Near is my Kirtle but nearer is my smock;" and this was his meaning, that ye should be more near us, and tender to us than he, and that ye should rather owe us good will than he, and that we should labour rather to your mastership than to him; And also, that Good that he had to dispose he had beset (*let*) it, and of parcell, he told me, he had delivered the Abbot of Langley fourscore pounds, whereof as he said to me, ye grudged and were in manner displeased, notwithstanding ye said again to him, ye should do as much; And he said to me ye named the places where; and therefore he advised me to labour effectually to your good mastership, for ye might help us well; for

he said ye had much Good of the dead to dispose, what of your father, God bless that soul, what of Berney, and what now of his good master Fastolf. And as for Sir John Fastolf, on whose soul Jesu have mercy! he said to me, ye had of his good four, four, and four more than he, in these same terms without any sum.

And after all other talkings he told me he should be with you in London hastily, and that he would say good word to you to relieve our poor place; Sir I beseech [you] be not displeased, for truly and I wist to have your heavy mastership therefore, I had lever it had been unthought. And [it] is this, that when Sir Thomas Howes and ye be soon at London, we might be so in your good grace, that our place might be brother to Langley, for that should glad us more than the commission that the Bishop of Norwich sent us on Thursday last past to gather the Dymes (*Tenths*) for that is a shrewd labour for us, a great cost and a shrewd jeopardy.

Evermore that high and mighty celestial Prince preserve you body and soul, and send you comfort of the Holy Ghost well to perform all your heart's desire in all your matters to his pleasaunce and your worship, and solace to all your well-willers. Written at Bromholm on the Saturday next after the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul last past.

From your Priest and Beadsman,

JOHN, Prior of BROMHOLM.

III. MAINTENANCE AGAIN: DUKE OF NORFOLK HOLDS CAISTER AND SUPPORTS CLAIMANTS AGAINST PASTON (June, 1461)

[Thos. Fastolfe, "the child," "the ward" of earlier letters, trumped up a claim on Fastolfe's property which he transferred to the Duke of Norfolk.]

To my right reverend and worshipful Master, my Master John Paston.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Master, I lowly recommend me unto your good mastership, pleaseth you to

weet that I have been at Framlingham, and spake Richard Southwell to have his advice in this matter, wherein he would give me but little counsel, and said ye were strangely disposed, for ye trusted no man; and had much language, which the bearer hereof shall inform your mastership.

And as for the Letters they were delivered my Lord at the Lodge, but I could not speak with his Lordship,[1] and such time as they were delivered Fitzwilliam was there, which is now keeper of Caister, and what time as (*when*) my Lord had seen the Letters, he commanded him to avoid and so he did; and then my Lord sent for Southwell, and in the mean time my Lord sent a man to me and asked me where ye were, and I told him ye were with the king, and so he sent me word that an answer would be made by Southwell to the king, saying that two or three heirs [of Fastolfe] had been with my Lord and shewed their evidence, and delivered it to my Lord, saying they have great wrong, beseeching my Lord that it might be reformed; wherefore he commanded me that I should go home, for other answer could I none have; so I abode (*waited*) upon Southwell to have known my Lord's answer to the King, which answer Southwell told me was, that he writeth to the King that certain points in your Letters be untrue, and that he shall prove [at] such time as he cometh before the King, beseeching the King to take it to no displeasure, for he is advised to keep it still until the time that he hath spoken with his Highness, for he trusteth to God to shew such evidence to the King and to the Lords that he should have best right and title thereto; and so he sent a man forth to the King this day; it were right well done, ye awaited upon his man coming,

[1] The order for the establishment of the secret House is given in the Earl of Northumberland's Household Book, where it is said that "at certain times of the year the nobility retired from their principal Mansion to some little adjoining Lodge; where they lived private, no longer kept open house, but put their servants on Board-wages, dismissed part of them to go to their Friends, and only retained a few of the most necessary about their person." (F.)

Edward IV. was crowned on Monday, the 29th of June, 1461.

that ye might know the ready intent of my Lord's writing. . . .

Thomas Fastolf was there the same time that I was there, and as I am informed they have delivered my Lord certain evidence; wherefore me seemeth it were right well done, saving your better advice, to come home and seal up your evidence, and have them with you to London, to prove his title nought. There be but two or three men within the place, and if ye think it best to do it, send word, and I suppose a remedy shall be had [*i.e.* by force].

Also, I hear no word of Master William, nor of the Writs for the parliament. Also it is told here that Todenham and Heydon have a pardon of the King, and that they shall come up to London with the Lady of Suffolk to the Coronation; also as for the Letter that ye sent to Thomas Wingfield, I have it still, for he is at London; some men say he moved my Lord for to enter, and some say Fitzwilliam is in default, so I can see there is but few good (*on your side*). Also my Master Sir Thomas Howys shall send a letter to the person ye weet of, for to deliver you the gear at London the next week; my right worshipful and reverend Master, Almighty God preserve you. Written at Norwich, on the morrow after Corpus Christi day. (*Thursday after octave of Whitsunday*).

Your poor Servant and Beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.

112. WILLIAM WORCESTER WANTS HIS REWARD AND SETS A PATRON TO WORK

To mine wellbeloved Friend Sir Thomas Howys, Parson of Blofield.

WELLBELOVED Friend I greet you well, and for as much as I understand that William Worcester, late the servant unto Sir John Fastolf, knight, whose soul God assoil, is not had in favour nor trust with my right well-

beloved friend John Paston, neither with you, as he saith, namely in such matters and causes as concerneth the will and testament of the said Sir John Fastolf; and as I am informed the said William purposeth him to go into his country, for the which cause he hath desired me to write unto you that ye would be a special good friend unto him, for the said master's sake, to have all such things as reason and conscience requireth, and that ye would be [a] mean unto Paston for him in this matter, to show him the more favour at this time for this my writing, in doing of any trouble to him, trusting that he will demean him in such wise that he shall have no cause unto him, but to be his good master, as he saith, and if there be any thing that I can do for you, I will be right glad to do it, and that knoweth Almighty God, which have you in his keeping. Written at Greenwich, the 28th day of August.

J. BEAUCHAMP.

John Beauchamp, Lord Beauchamp of Powyk, Worcestershire, a famous soldier and Knight of the Garter. Died 1475.

113. DIFFICULTIES INCREASING (24th Sept., 1461)

To the right reverend and worshipful Sir, and my good Master, John Paston, Esquire.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership, praying you to weet that I was at Blake's and spake with his Wife, and she saith he was not at home this three weeks, he rideth up the Country to take accounts of Bailiffs, and that this day fev'night he should have sate in Caister by you upon accounts, and from thence he should have ridden to Lynn, and that he shall be at home on Monday at night next coming; wherefore I have left my errand with her; but she saith that he shall not mowe come (*be able to come*) to you, for my Lady [Duchess of Norfolk] have sent for him in great haste, both by a Letter and by a token to come to her, as hastily

as he may, notwithstanding she shall do the errand to him.

As for Yelverton, I did a good feel to enquire of James Skinner when the said Yelverton should go to London; he said not this sev'night, he could not tell what day till he had spoken with his Son, his Son should come to him ere his Master should ride; I shall enquire more at Walsingham; and for God's love be not too long from London, for men say there, as I have been [informed] that my Lord of Gloucester (*Richard*) should have Caister, and there is great noise of this revel that was done in Suffolk (*the seizure of Cotton*) by Yelverton and Jenney; and your well-willers think that if they might prevail in this, they would attempt you in others, but cease their power and malice, and preserve you from all evil, and at the reverence of God let some interposition go a-twixt you and my mistress your Mother ere ye go to London, and all that ye do shall speed the better, for she is set on great malice, and every man that she speaketh with, knoweth her heart, and it is like to be a foul noise [over] all the Country without it be soon ceased.

Also Sir it is told me, that my Lord of Norfolk is coming to Framlingham, and that ye be greatly commended in his household, therefore it were well done, me seemeth, that ye spake with him.

The Holy Trinity keep you. Written at Norwich, the Thursday after St. Matthew (21 *Sept.*).

Your poor Priest,

JAMES GLOYS.

Soon after this Sir John Howard caused Paston to be imprisoned in the Fleet.

114. HENRY WINDSOR WANTS HIS REWARD (1461)

To my full worshipful and special good Master, John Paston, Esquire, abiding at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and some time my most special good Master, I recommend me unto your good Master-

ship, with all my poor service, if it may in any wise suffice; and farthermore Sir I beseech you, now being in your country, where ye may daily call unto you my Master Sir Thomas Howys, once to remember my poor matter; and by your discretions to take such a direction therein, and so to conclude, as may be to your discharge, and to my furtherance; according to the Will of him that is passed unto God, whose soul I pray Jesu pardon! for truly, Sir, there was in him no fault, but in me only, if it be not as I have remembered your Mastership afore this time. For truly, Sir, I dare say I should have had as special, and as good a Master of you as any poor man, as I am, within England should have had of a worshipful man, as you are, if ye had never meddled with the Goods of my Master Fastolf.

And as much ye would have done, and laboured for me, in my right, if it had been in the hands of any other man than of yourself only. But, I trust in God, at your next coming, to have an answer, such as I shall be content with; and if it may be so; I am and shall be your Servant in that I can or may, that knoweth our Lord Jesus, whom I beseech save, and send you a good end in all your matters, to your pleasure and worship everlasting, Amen. Written at London, the 4th day of October.

As for Tidings, the King will be at London within three days next coming, and all the Castles and Holds both in South Wales and in North Wales are given, and yielded up, into the King's hand; and the Duke of Exeter and the Earl of Pembroke (*J. Tudor*) are flown and [have] taken the Mountains, and divers Lords with great puissance are after them. And the most part of Gentlemen, and men of worship are come in to the King, and have grace of all Wales. The Duke of Somerset, the Lord Hungerford, and Robert Whityngham, and other four or five Esquires, are come unto Normandy out of Scotland, and as yet they stand strait under arrest, and as Merchants that are come late thence say, they are like to be deemed and judged Prisoners. My

Lord Wenlock, Sir John Cley, and the Dean of Saint Severin's, have abode at Calais these three weeks, and yet are there abiding a safe Conduct, going upon an Embassy to the French King. And Sir Walter Blount, Treasurer of Calais, with a great Fellowship of Soldiers of Calais, and many other men of the Marches, have lain, and yet do, at a Siege afore the Castle of Hammes, by-side Calais, and daily make great war, either party to other.

Item, I send unto you a copy of a Letter that was taken upon the Sea, made by the Lord Hungerford and Whityngham.

Item, we shall have a great embassy out of Scotland in all haste of Lords.

At your Commandment, and Servant,

HENRY WYNDSORE.

115. THE ENCLOSURE IN WINDSOR'S LETTER: A LOYAL LETTER TO QUEEN MARGARET (1461)

To the Queen of England in Scotland.

MADAM, please it your good God, we have since our coming hither, written to your Highness thrice; the first, we sent by Bruges, to be sent to you by the first vessel that went into Scotland; the other two Letters we sent from Depe, the one, by the Carvel in the which we came; and the other, in another vessel; but, madam, all was one thing in substance, of putting you in knowledge of the King your Uncle's death (*Charles VII. of France*), whom God assoil, and how we stand arrested, and do yet. But on Tuesday next we trust and understand, we shall up to the King your Cousin Germain (*Louis XI.*). His Commissaries, at the first of our tarrying, took all our Letters, and Writings, and bare them up to the King; leaving my Lord of Somerset in keeping at [the] Castle of Arques; and my Fellow Whityngham and me, for we had safe conduct, in the Town of Depe; where we are yet. But on Tuesday next we understand, that it pleaseth the said King's Highness, that we shall

come to his presence: and are charged to bring us up, Monsieur de Cressell now Bailiff of Canse and Monsieur de la Mot.

Madam, feareth you not, but be of good comfort, and beware that ye adventure not your person, ne my Lord the Prince, by the Sea, till ye have other word from us; in less than (*unless*) your person cannot be sure there as ye are, and that extreme necessity drive you thence. And for God's sake [let] the King's Highness be advised the same; for as we be informed, the Earl of March is into Wales by land, and hath sent his Navy thither by Sea. And, Madam, think verily, we shall not sooner be delivered, but that we will come straight to you, without Death take us by the way; the which we trust he will not, till we see the King and you peaceable again in your Realm; the which we beseech God soon to see, and to send you that your Highness desireth. Written at Depe, the 30th day of August.

Your true Subjects and Liege men,

HUNGERFORD,
WHITYNGHAM.

These are the names of those men that are in Scotland with the Queen.

The King Harry is at Kirkhowbre (*Kirkcudbright*) with four men and a child.

Queen Margaret is at Edenburgh and her Son.

The Lord Roos and his Son [and 22 others. See G. 480.]

116. YELVERTON AND JENNEY, HAVING SEIZED COTTON, SELL IT (Oct., 1461)

To my Master Paston the elder, be this Letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership the cause why I write, I let you have knowledge of the men that be in Cotton-Hall, how they be strangely disposed against you, for as I hear say, they make revel there, they melt lead, and break down your

bridge, and make that no man may go into [the] place but on a ladder, and make them as strong as they can against you, by the supportation of Jenney, and Debenham and his Son, for they say there that Jenney hath sold the livelihood unto Debenham, and that his Son the Knight shall dwell there, and therefore they have warned a Court against Monday, and now they have advised to keep it on Saturday before Monday; what they mean thereby I wot never; but as for the fellowship in the place that is there now, and have been there all this week, there is no man of substance as we hear, and there have been but seven or eight all this week, but there will be a great fellowship this night or to-morrow upon Saturday, for then they will keep the Court; and as for Edward Dale, he dare not abide well at home, they threaten him so, because he will send them no victuals, and as for myself, Edward Dale dare not let me well be there, for taking in suspicion. And as for the Tenants, they be well disposed, except one or two, so that ye will support them in haste, for they may not keep of their Cattle off the ground longer, and specially they desire to have your own presence, and they would be of great comfort. No more I write to you, but the Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written on the Friday after my departing.

By your Servant,
WILLIAM NAUNTON.

117. PASTON RELEASED

A Letter to John Paston, Esq., from his Wife, shewing his Imprisonment in the Fleet.

RIGHT worshipful Husband I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that I received your Letter that ye sent me by John Holme on Wednesday last past, and also I received another Letter on Friday at night, that ye sent me by Nicholas Newman's man, of the which Letters I thank you, for I should else have thought that it had been worse with you than it hath

been, or shall be, by the grace of Almighty God, and yet I could not be merry, since I had the last Letter till this day that the Mayor sent to me, and sent me word that he had knowledge for very truth that ye were delivered out of the Fleet; and that Howard was committed to ward for divers great complaints that were made to the King of him; it was talked in Norwich, and in divers other places in the country on Saturday last past, that ye were committed to the Fleet, and in good faith, as I heard say, the people were right sorry thereof, both of Norwich and in the country, ye are right much bound to thank God, and all those that love you, that ye have so great love of the people as ye have; ye are much beholden to the Mayor, and to Gilbert, and to divers others of the Aldermen, for faithfully they owe you good will to their powers.

I have spoken with Sir Thomas Howes for such things as ye wrote to me for, and he promised me that he should labour it after your intent as fast as he could, and in good faith, as my brother and Playters can tell you, as by his saying to us, he is and will be faithful to you; and as for William Worcestor he hath been set so upon the hone[1] what by the parson and by others, as my brother and Playters shall tell you, that they hope he will do well enough; the Parson said right well and plainly to him.—The Parson told me that he had spoken with Sir William Chamberlayn, and with his wife, and he thinketh that they will do well enough after your intent, so that they be pleasantly intreated; and the Parson told me that he wist well, that Sir William Chamberlayn could do more ease in such matters as ye wrote of touching my Lord of Bedford, than any man could do that liveth at this day; also he told me that he felt by them that they would owe you right good will, so that ye would owe them good will; the Parson hopeth verily to make you accorded when he cometh to London.

[1] This expression is taken from setting a razor, and means that he had been talked to not only in a smooth, but likewise in a sharp and severe manner. (F.) The parson, Howes.

Item, my brother and Playters were with Calthorpe to enquire of the matter that ye wrote to me of, what answer he gave them, they shall tell you; I sent the Parson of Hellesdon to Gurney to speak to him of the same matter, and he saith faithfully there was no such thing desired of him, and though he had been desired, he would neither have said nor done against you; he said he had ever found you loving and faithful to him, and so he said he would be to you to his power, and desiring me that I would not think him the contrary.

As for John Gros he is at Sloley, therefore he might not be spoken with.

I pray you that ye will send me word whether ye will that I shall remove from hence, for it beginneth to wax a cold abiding here (*Hellesdon?*). Sir Thomas Howes and John Russ shall make an end of all things after your intent, as much as they can do therein this week, and he proposeth to come forwards to you on the Monday next after St. Leonard's day (6 *Nov.*).

My Brother and Playters should have been with you ere this time, but that they would abide till this day were past, because of the Shire [court]. I spoke to my Brother William as ye bad me, and he told me, so God him help, that he hired two horses two days before that ye rode, that he might have ridden forth with you; and because that ye spoke not to him to ride with you, he said that he wend ye would [not] have had him with you.

Thomas Fastolf's Mother was here on the next day after ye were ridden, to have spoken with you for her Son, she prayeth you at the reverence of God, that ye will be his good Master, and to help him in his right, that he may have home his livelihood (*property*) out of their hands that have had it in his nonage; she saith that they would make him a year younger than he is, but she saith that he is more than twenty-one, and upon that she dare take an oath.

And the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters, and send

ye victory of all your Enemies. Written in haste, on Soulmas-day (2 *Nov.*).

By yours
MARGARET PASTON.

118. HOWES AND WORCESTER TO HELP YELVERTON AGAINST PASTON (Dec., 1461 ?)

To my right worshipful Master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Master, I recommend me unto you, &c. the cause of my writing is this, I was at Blofield on Saint Andrew's day (30 *November*) with the parson, and he understood none other but that I came to see his mastership, for it was his cheve day[1]; and there I moved unto him of the land in Southwark how I heard say when I was in Suffolk that Jenney made his avaunt that he had given you and him a chop of twenty pound of land; and incontinent he told me all the matter better than I could tell him; and as I could understand in him by my simple wit, that he was of knowledge of all the matter, for he said that Yelverton came down from the Bench, and pleaded the matter, and for cause ye were so lache (*negligent*), and came not in time, the matter yede amiss, and so I understand by him, that he is disposed to excuse Yelverton in all matters rather than you, but nevertheless make good cheer to the parson as though ye understood that he were your friend, till time ye have your intent, but beware and trust him not, but make you so strong in lordship and in the law, that ye reck not much whether he be good or bad, &c.

Item, ye be much beholden unto Thomas Greene and to Edmund Wydeville, brother to Hugh Fenn, for they report much worship of your mastership in all matters, that causes the substance of the towne to owe you service, and be well disposed unto your mastership, and that understand I every day; and if it please you, when we parted at Norwich in your place ye said unto

[1] His cheve-day, or thriving day, I should suppose means the day on which he received the profits of his living; Saint Andrew's day being now a usual time for the payment of compositions for tythes. (F.)

me ye would somewhat do by my simple advice; and this is mine advice, that in any wise ye make Hugh Fenn and Thomas Greene on your counsel, if ye can find in your heart, for I dare say as I hear and understand that they owe you right good will and service, for a man may hear by the half what the whole meaneth; and therefore for God's love remember you well in this matter, for and it stood on my life I would do as I advise you, &c.

Item, for our Lord's love go through with William Worcester, and also please Shrews as ye think in your heart best for to do, for it is a common proverb, "A man must sometimes set a candle before the Devil;" and therefore, though it be not aldermost meet and profitable, yet "of two harms the least is to be taken."

Item, ye shall understand that the parson told me that they were summoned to come for the probate of the Testament at [the] Conversion of Saint Paul (25 *January*), and therefore I would advise you in any wise, that ye should understand the matter wisely ere ye come home, for I suppose that Yelverton and he is confederate, and accord together.

Item, when I was at Blofield with the parson, there came Robert Fyrass (*Ferrers?*) to him, saying that he is compelled by the King's Commissioners to have harness after his degree, and that the parson sent him to my mistress that she should deliver him harness, and I understand she will not till ye come home, but ye shall understand it is an alms deed to do him good, understanding his necessity and need that he stand in, and also understanding that he was kinsman to my master, and it is a common proverb, "A man should keep from the blind and give it to his kind" (*kindred*), and every man will say well hereof, the more because he is a gentleman, and of his kin, and in great penury; and therefore for the love of God remember such matters. No more at this time, but God have you in his keeping both body and soul, and speed you in your matters as well as I would ye should do.

[No signature]

119. JOHN RUSSE WANTS A REWARD (1462)

To the right reverend and worshipful Sir, my right honourable Master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my right honourable Master, I recommend me to you in my most humble wise, and please it your good mastership to weet, that it is said here, that my Lord Worcester is like to be Treasurer, with whom I trust ye stand right well in conceit, with which God continue; wherefore I beseech your mastership that if my said Lord have the said office, that it like you to desire the nomination of one of the offices, either of the Controuller or Searchership of Yarmouth for a servant of yours; and I should so guide me in the office as I trust should be most profit to my said Lord; and if your mastership liked to get grant thereof, that then it please you to licence one of your servants to take out the patent of the said office, and if it cost five, or six, or eight Marks I shall truly content it again; and yearly as long as I might have the offices, or any of them, I shall give my master your son five marks toward an Hackney (*a pacing horse*).

It should be to me right a good mean to stand as well in the trust as in the conceit amongst merchants, with whom and with all men, I call myself a servant of yours, and so will do, if it please you, which boldeth me the more to call upon your worshipful mastership in this matter, wherein I beseech you to forgive me my boldness in this behalf. And if I knew that my Lord should have the office in certain then I would wait upon your good mastership there to obtain the patent, if it pleased your good mastership to get me the grant, &c.

No more unto you my right honourable master at this time, but Jesu I beseech send you a good conclusion in all your matters, and grant you ever your heart's desire.

Your continual Servant and Beadsman,
JOHN RUSSE.

120. RUSSE HINTS HOME-TRUTHS (1462)

To the right worshipful my right honourable Master John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my right honourable Master, I recommend me to you in my most humble wise, and please your mastership to weet, that here is one Thomas Chapman, an evil disposed man alway against you, as I have informed your mastership many times, and now he hath laboured to my Lord Treasurer [Worcester] to supplant me, and brought down writing from the King and my Lord Treasurer; but, ere his writing came, Wydeville found the means, by the supportation of Master Fenn, that we had a discharge for him out of Chancery; wherefore the said Chapman proposeth to be at London in all haste, and to advertise the King and my Lord Treasurer against me, to the greatest hurt he can imagine: wherefore I beseech your mastership considering his evil disposition to you, and also the rather at my poor instance, that ye like that my Lord Treasurer might understand that the said Chapman is of no reputation, but evil disposed to bribery of Strangers, and by colour of his office of Supervisor of the Search shall greatly hurt the Port; the said Chapman's supporters is Blakeney, Clerk of the Signet, and Avery Cornburgh, Yeoman of the King's Chamber; he hath here of Avery's twenty-four Tuns [of] Wine, whereof at the long way, he shall make the said Avery a lewd (*bad*) reckoning; the said Chapman loveth not you, nor no man to you ward, &c.

Sir, I pray God bring you once to reign among your countrymen in love, and to be dreaded; the longer ye continue there the more hurt groweth to you; men say ye will neither follow the advice of your own kindred, nor of your counsel, but only your own wilfulness, and which, but grace be, shall be your destruction.

It is my part to inform your mastership as the common voice is, God better it, and grant you once heart's ease; for it is half a death to me to hear the general voice of the people, which daily encreaseth, &c.

Sir, I beseech your mastership to remember my mistress for the little silver, which, for certain things delivered to your use, is due to me; I have need of it now; I have bought Salt and other things, which hath brought me out of much silver, I would trust and I needed to borrow twenty pounds your mastership would ease me for a time, but this that I desire is mine own duty (*due to me*). And Jesu grant you ever your heart's desire to your worship and profit, and preserve you my right honourable master from all adversity.

Written at Yarmouth, the 15th day of July. Here is a Carvel of Caen, in Normandy, and he taketh Dutchmen (*Germans*), and ransometh them grievously.

Your Servant and Beadsman
JOHN RUSSE.

121. THAT THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK MUST BE PLACATED (May, 1463)

To my right worshipful Master John Paston, in haste.

[The young Duke, who, with his mother, had turned Yorkist.]

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet, that I have spoken with Strange's wife of the matter that ye spoken to me of, and she saith plainly to me by her faith, that she knew never none such nor never heard of none such, and [she] told to me in like wise as she had said to James Gloys, and she said to me if she could enquire of any other that she thought should have knowledge of any such, she should weten of them, and letten me have knowledge thereof; and if ye suppose that any other be in this Country that ye think should have knowledge of this foresaid matter, if ye will send me word thereof, I shall do my part therein.

Also I have been at Swainsthorp and spoken with Cocket, and he saith that he will do like as ye bad me that I should say to him for to do. And I have spoken

with the Sexton [1] and said to him as ye bad me that I should do, and he asked me right faithfully how ye sped in your matters.

I told him that ye had fair behests, and I said, I hoped that ye should do right well therein; and he said he supposed that D (*John Damme?*) would do for you; but he said, he was no hasty labourer in none matter, he said by his faith he wist where a man was that laboured to him for a matter right a long time, and always he behested that he would labour it effectually; but while he sued to him he could never have remedy of his matter, and then when he thought that he should no remedy have to sue to him, he spake with Fynes that is now Speaker of the Parliament, and prayed him that he would do for him in his matter, and gave him a reward; and within right short time after his matter was sped; and, the said Sexton and other folks that be your right well-willers have counselled me that I should counsel you to make other means than ye have made to other folks, that would speed your matters better than they have done that ye have spoken to thereof before this time. Sundry folks have said to me, that they think verily but if ye have my Lord of Suffolk's good Lordship while the world is as it is, ye can never live in peace without ye have his good lordship; therefore I pray you with all mine heart, that ye will do your part to have his good lordship and his love in ease of all those matters that ye have to do, and in easing of mine heart also, for by my truth I am afraid else, both of these matters the which ye have in hand now, and of other that be not done to yet, but if he will do for you and be your good Lord. I pray you heartily send me word how ye do, and how ye speed in your matters; and I pray you as for such things as James hath a bill of, that I may have them as hastily as ye may; and that ye will vouchsafe to buy a piece

[1] The Sacrist or Sexton of the Priory of Norwich was the officer who had the care of the Sacra, or Holy Things, as the Church Plate, Copes, &c. he was likewise Secretary, Auditor, and Chancellor of the Convent, and had a Subsacrist or Deputy to perform the servile parts of his office. In 1444 Brother Richard de Walsham was appointed Sacrist. (F.)

of black buckram for to line with a gown for me, I should buy me a murrey gown to go in this Summer, and lay in the collar the satin that ye gave me for an hood; and I can get none good buckram in this town to line it with. The Holy Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters.

Written at Norwich, on the Friday next after Crouchmas day (*Invention, or Discovery, of the Cross, May* 3).

Yours

MARGARET PASTON.

122. ORDERS FROM THE DUKE OF NORFOLK

To our right trusty and entirely well beloved Servant John Paston, the elder.

The Duke of Norfolk.

[The 4th and last Mowbray Duke, who succeeded his father—the annexer of Caister—in 1461, ætat 17.]

RIGHT trusty and entirely well beloved Servant, we greet you heartily well, and specially praying you that ye will be with us at Framlingham on Sunday next coming, that we may commune with you there, and have your sad advice in such matters as concerneth greatly to our weal, which shall be ministred unto you at your coming.

Praying you that ye fail not hereof, as our special trust is in you; and our Lord preserve you in his keeping.

Written at Framlingham, the 31st day of August.

NORFOLK.

123. TO BEWARE OF ENEMIES AND PHYSICIANS (1464)

To mine right worshipful Husband John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me unto you, pleaseth you to weet that I sent yesterday Loveday to

Norwich to speak with the Vicar of Dereham for the matter between Master Constantine and him, and he saith that as for that matter Master Constantine sued him for faith and truth breaking, and he sued Master Constantine in the Temporal Court upon an obligation of ten pounds; and there was made an appointment between them by the advice of both their Counsels, before Master Robert Popy, that each of them should release other, and so they did, and the sureties were withdrawn on both parties, and each of them acquittanced other; and as for any Copy of the plea he had never none, nor he nor Master John Estgate, that was his Attorney, remembereth not that it was registered; and Master John Estgate saith, if it should be searched in the Register it would take a fortnight's work, and yet peradventure never be the nearer.

Sir Thomas Howes hath been right busy this week at Blofield, in writing and looking up of gear (*papers*), and John Russe hath been with him there the most part of all this week, and this day was Robert Lynne there with him; what they have done I wot not, but I shall weet if I may.

It was told me, that Sir Thomas desired of John Russe to make him a new Inventory of Sir John Fastolf's Goods; John Russe might not be spoken with yet, for the Letter that he should have written, which ye sent me word of.

Item, it is told that the Duke of Suffolk is come home, and either he is dead, or else right sick, and not like to escape; and Sir John Howard is come home; and it is said that the Lord Scales (*A. Woodville*) and he have a Commission to enquire, why they of this country that were sent for, came not hastilier up after they were sent for.

It is reported that the King is greatly displeased therewith. At the reverence of God arm yourself as mightily as ye can against your enemies, for I know verily that they will do against you as mightily as they can with all their power.

It is told me that Sir Thomas shall come up in haste, and other such as he can make for his party.

Also for God's sake beware what Medicines ye take of any Physicians of London; I shall never trust to them because of your Father and mine Uncle, whose Souls God assoil!

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters. Written in haste, on the Friday next before Saint Barnabas (11 *June*).

By yours

MARGARET PASTON.

All the Gentlemen of this Country that went up to the King are countermanded, and are come home again. It is told me that Rous of Suffolk is dead; if John Gayn might have any release of his Son, if it might do him ease, it were a good turn for him.

124. EDWARD IV. LICENSES THE COLLEGE OF PRIESTS AND PROMISES HIS FAVOUR (Sept., 1464)

During this year the King was moving from place to place, and by condescension and affability acquiring popularity.

Appointment of the King for the Foundation of a College at Caister, &c.

(Abridged.)

THE King, for the sum of 300 marks (200*l.*) of lawful money of England, or of silver plate to the value thereof, granteth to John Paston the elder, Esquire, to have licence, lawfully made, to make and found a College of seven Priests and seven poor folk at Caister, in Flegg (*hundred*) in Norfolk, for the Soul of Sir John Fastolf, Knight; they to be endued with certain rent, and otherwise after the intent and effect as is specified in a bill thereof, signed by the King; and that he shall shew his good grace, favour, and assistance to have the said foundation enacted and authorised in the Parliament

next holden. . . . Also, the King granteth to be good and favourable Lord to the said John Paston, and in especial in all things touching the execution of the Will of the said Sir John Fastolf, and also to be good and favourable Lord to the said John Paston, in supporting and helping him, in that the King's highness may lawfully do, in such matters as are in debate atwixt the said John Paston and William Yelverton, or William Jenney, or any other, concerning the lands and tenements, goods or chattels, that were the said Sir John Fastolf's.

And that the King shall receive an hundred pounds of the said 300 marks, what time he send for it, and the remanent as soon as the said foundation take effect; and also that his highness shall get the assent of the reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in such appointments as is made.

Also the King granteth that whereas this bill is not sufficiently made in clauses and terms according to the intent thereof, that his highness will take and execute the very intent thereof, notwithstanding the insufficience of any such terms and clauses in this bill. Written at Marlborough, the Monday next after the Nativity of our Lady (8 *Sept.*), the fourth year of the reign of the King.

125. PASTON URGED TO MAKE BETTER SPEED (1465)

To my right worshipful Master, John Paston, the oldest, be this delivered in haste.

I recommend me, &c.

IF it please you, I would right fain that John Jenney were put out of the Commission of the Peace, and that my (? *your*) brother William Lumnor were set in his stead, for me thinketh it were right necessary that there were such a man in that county that oweth you good will, and I know verily he oweth you right good will, he was with me at Caister but late; if there be made any labour for Doctor Allen to be Justice of the Peace, I pray you for God's sake let it be letted if ye may, for he will take too

much upon him, if he were, I would not that he were remembered of your part, but if (*unless*) he be spoken of of other parts; he is right great with Master Philip Lypyate and the Bailiff of Cossey (*adherents of Suffolk*).

If it please you to weet that Wykes did arrest one William Dylmyn of Norwich, as Pampyng can inform you of, for certain Harness which he delivered him at Newcastle for to carry to Yarmouth by water, and there to deliver it to him again, which harness he kept still, and [he] may not be delivered, and now there is come down an Habeas Corpus for him, and [he] must appear at the Common Pleas on Friday next coming; wherefore if it pleased you that there might be taken an action in Wykes's name of trespass under such form as there may be a Capias awarded against his coming, for after that he was arrested, he did (*caused*) Daubeney to be arrested for maintaining; and as for the Harness, Wykes delivered it to him the 10th day of January, the 2d year of King Edward IV. (1462) in Pilgrim-street, at Newcastle; Imprimis a pair Brigandines, a Salet, a Boarspear, a Bow, eighteen arrows, two pair Pouldrons (*shoulder-pieces*), a standard of mail, a pair [of] Sleeves of plate, to the value of five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and at the reverence of God, sloth not your matters now, and make an end of them, either purvey you to make them or to mar them in haste, for this is too horrible a cost and trouble, that ye have and have had, for to endure any while, and it is great heaviness to your friends and well willers, and great joy and comfort to your enemies.

My Lord of Norwich (*the Bishop*) said to me that he would not abide the sorrow and trouble that ye have abiden, to win all Sir John Fastolf's good. God be your speed in all your matters. Written at Hellesdon, the 13th day of May.

I think right long to hear tidings till I have tidings from you.

Your

MARGARET PASTON.

126. DANGER AT DRAYTON [PASTON'S MANOR NEXT HELLESDON OPPOSITE SUFFOLK'S PLACE OF COSSEY]. ABSENTEE PARSON. BOARD IN PRISON.

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I have sent to Master John Smyth and to Master Stephen to have advice for the Church of Drayton; and they send me word that there must be had a Commission from the Bishop to call in the Parson Flowerdew, and that must be proclaimed in the Church of Drayton three times by a Dean[1] and after that if he appear not within six months after the first Proclamation, that then he to be deprived, and the Patron to present whom he lists, and else (*otherwise*) your presentation is not sufficient. And I have so purveyed that a Commission is had, and shall be served as hastily as it may be.

As for John Rysing I have sent to him to weet the cause that he is not brought up to London, and he saith that he called upon the Sheriff that he might be had up for [to] come to his answer, and the Sheriff told him, that he would not bring him up at his own cost; and John Andrews said that he would not have him up, and so he is still in prison at Ipswich; and so shall he be but if yc can find the better mean for to have him out; I have sent to him 13*s.* 4*d.* to keep himself therewith, he payeth for his board weekly twenty-pence; and Hopton and Smith be there still also, and they have money enough, that wheresoever they have it; Rysing deemeth that they have comfort of the other party (*Suffolk's*) and I send you the Copy of the Warrant that they were arrested by, &c.

I spake not with my Mother since Richard Calle brought me the Letter from you touching her matter, for

[1] This means the Rural Dean, who had a district of ten Churches, in the Country, wherein he exercised a jurisdiction of great advantage to ecclesiastical discipline, and the sentences of superior ecclesiastical Courts were to be executed by him. (F.)

I might have no leisure; when I speak with her at leisure I will remember her in that matter according to your writing; and as for your Tenants of Drayton, as I can understand by them, they be right good and true hearted to you to their powers, and full fain would that ye had it again in peace, for they had as lief almost be Tenants to the Devil as to the Duke, except Will Herne, Piers at Sloth, and one Knott of the same Town, for they be not good.

All your Tenants at Hellesden and Drayton, except these three, be right glad that we are there amongst them, and so be many others of our old neighbours and Friends; and but if ye come home by Wednesday or Thursday in Whitsun week, I purpose me to see you in secret wise by Trinity Sunday, but if ye send to me contrary commandment ere that time; and I pray you send me your advice how ye will that we do against the next shire [court], which shall be the Monday next after Trinity Sunday, as for calling upon the Replevin that the beasts of Drayton were delivered by.

Item, Richard Calle told me that ye desired to have Master Philip's name, and his name is Philip Lypyate, and I sent you a Letter by Henry Wilton's man, wherein I wrote Master Philip's name; and in the same Letter I wrote to you for Will. Lumnor; I pray you send me word if ye have it, and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written the Monday next after Ascension Day.

By yours

MARGARET PASTON.

127. DUKE OF SUFFOLK TRIES TO SEIZE HELLESDON (July, 1465)

To my Master John Paston, in haste.

PLEASETH it your mastership to weet of the rule and disposition of the Master Philip and the bailiff of Cossey, with others of my Lord of Suffolk's men, on Monday last past at afternoon, [who] were at Hellesdon, with the number of three hundred men for to have entered, notwithstanding they said they came not for to enter, but without doubt and they had been strong enough for us, they would have entered, and that we understand enough

but we [had] knowing of their coming and purveyed so for them, that we were strong enough; we had sixty men within the place, and guns, and such ordnance, so that, if they had set upon us, they had been destroyed; and there my Mistress was within and my Master Sir John, and [he] hath gotten him as great worship for that day as any gentleman might do, and so is it reported of the party and in all Norwich; and my Lord of Norwich (*Bishop Lyhart*) sent thither Master John Salett, and Master John Bulleman for to treat, and so they did; and the Duke's men sai l they had a warrant for to attach John Daubeney, Wykes, Calle, Hunworth, and Blickling and other, which they would have, and my Master Sir John answered them and said that they were not within, and though they had been, they should not have had them; and so they desired one of our men, and so Naunton stood by my Mistress and asked them whom they would have, and said if they would have him, he would go with them, and so he did, and on the next day they carried him forth to my Lord of Suffolk to Claxton, through Norwich, and there we had found a remedy for him for to have let (*stopped*) him, and he would not, but needs go forth with them; but like a gentleman he was entreated amongst them. And Harleston desired at Hellesdon to speak with my Master Sir John, and so he did, and said to him it were right well done that he rode to my Lord of Suffolk, and desired him in any wise that he should do so, and said that it was his duty so for to do, in as much as my Lord was come to [the] country, and that he would ride with him, and bring him to my Lord; and he answered and said to him, when that he understood that my Lord were his Father's good Lord and his, that then he would see his Lordship, and else he had none errand to him; and so they departed; and then appointment was taken that they should send home their men, and we should send home ours; and now my Lord of Suffolk's men come from Claxton to Norwich, and face us and fray upon us, this daily, there fell upon me before Swaine's door twelve of his men, eight of them in

harness, and there they would have mischieved me, and the Sheriff letted (*hindered*) them and other, and they make their avaunt where that I may be gotten, I should die, and so they lie in wait for to mischief me, Daubeney and Wykes; and so I dare not ride out alone without a man with me, and I understand there is coming an Oyer [and] Determiner to enquire of all riots, and my Lord of Suffolk and Yelverton be Commissioners; and so they say as many of us as can be taken shall be endicted and hanged forthwith; and so the people here are dismayed with their rule, wherefore that it like you to send word how my Mistress shall do at Hellesdon, and we in all other matters; and whether ye will that we fetch again the flock of Hellesdon, for they are now driven to Causton, and there go they on the heath; and my Lord of Suffolk will be at Drayton on Lammas-day, and keep the Court there, wherefore ye must seek a remedy for it, or else it will not do well.

If my Lord of Norfolk would come, he should make all well, for they fear him above all things, for it is noised here that my Lord of Norfolk hath taken party in this matter, and all the country is glad of it, saying, that if he come they will wholly go with him.

And me seemeth it were well done to move my Lord in it, though ye should give him the profits of Hellesdon and Drayton for the keeping, and some money beside; for ye must seek some other remedy than ye do, or else in my conceit it shall go to the Devil, and be destroyed, and that in right short time, and therefore at the reverence of God take some appointment with Master Yelverton, and such as ye think should most hurt.

I beseech you to pardon me of my writing, for I have pity to see the tribulation that my Mistress hath here, and all your Friends, &c.

Almighty Jesu preserve and keep you. Written the Wednesday next Saint Thomas's day (*7th of July*).

Your poor Servant and Beadsman

RICHARD CALLE.

As the Duke of Norfolk would not oppose the Duke of Suffolk, and Paston refused to compromise, Calle's forecast proved true.

128. Successful Violence of Duke of Suffolk's Men (July, 1465)

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, in haste.

Right worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, praying you heartily that ye will seek a mean that your servants may be in peace, for they be daily in fear of their lives; the Duke of Suffolk's men threaten daily Daubeney, Wykes, and Richard Calle, that wheresoever they may get them they shall die, and affrays have been made on Richard Calle this week, so that he was in great jeopardy at Norwich among them; and great affrays have been made upon me and my fellowship here on Monday last past, of which Richard Calle telleth me that he hath sent you word of in writing, more plainly than I may do at this time, but I shall inform you more plainly hereafter.

I suppose there shall be great labour against you and your servants at the Assizes and Sessions here, wherefore me seemeth, saving your better advice, it were well done that ye should speak with the Justices ere they come here; and if ye will that I complain to them or to any other, if God fortune me life and health, I will do as ye advise me to do, for in good faith, I have been simply (*meanly*) entreated among them; and what with sickness, and trouble that I have had, I am brought right low and weak, but to my power I will do as I can or may in your matters.

The Duke of Suffolk and both the Duchesses (*his mother and wife*) shall come to Claxton this day, as I am informed, and this next week he shall be at Cossey whether he will come further hitherward or not, I wot not yet; it is said that he should come hither, and yet his men said here on Monday that he claimed no title to this place; they said their coming was but to take out such riotous people as was here within this place, and such as were the King's felons, and endicted and outlawed men, nevertheless they would shew no warrants whereby to take none such, though there had been such

here; I suppose, if they might have come in peaceably, they would have made another cause of their coming.

When all was done and they should depart, Harleston and other desired me that I should come and see mine old Lady (*the dowager-Duchess*), and sue to my Lord, and if any thing were amiss it should be amended.

I said if I should sue for any remedy, that I should sue further, and let the King and all the Lords of this land to have knowledge what hath been done to us, if so were that the Duke would maintain that hath been done to us by his Servants, if ye would give me leave.

I pray you send me word, if ye will that I make any complaint to the Duke or the Duchess, for as it is told me, they know not the plainness (*brutality*) that hath been done in such things as hath been done in their names.

I should write much more to you but for lack of leisure.

I commanded my Master Tom (*Playters?*) this day to have come again by me from Norwich, when he had spoken with Richard Calle, but he came not; I would he were quit of his indictment, so that he were quit of your service, for by my truth, I hold the place the more ungracious that he is in, for his disposition in divers things, the which ye shall be informed of hereafter.

The Trinity have you in keeping. Written the Friday next after Saint Thomas,

By your
MARGARET PASTON.

129. MARGARET PASTON AND HER YOUNGER SON HOLD COTTON AGAINST DEBENHAM (Oct., 1465)

To my right reverend and worshipful Father John Paston, be this delivered.

AFTER all humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing; please it

you to have knowledge that as on Sunday next before Michaelmas Day as my mother came from London ward, she came homeward by Cotton, and she sent for me, to Hellesdon, to come to her thither, and so I have been in the place ever since; and as soon as Michaelmas day was passed I began to distrain the tenants, and gathered some silver, as much, I trow, as will pay for our costs, and yet I keep here right a good fellowship, and more were promised me, which that came not to me, whereby I was near deceived, for when Debenham heard say how that I began to gather silver, he raised many men within one day and a half to the number of three hundred men, as I was credibly ascertained by a Yeoman of the Chamber of my Lord's (*D. of Norfolk*) that oweth me good will, which Yeoman as soon as he had seen their fellowship rode strait to my Lord and informed him of it; and also he informed my Lord how that I had gathered another great fellowship, which fellowship he named more than we were by one hundred and an half and yet more; and he said unto my Lord, and my Lady, and to their Counsel that without that my Lord took a direction in the matter, that there were like to be done great harm on both our parties, which were a great disworship to my Lord considering how that he taketh us both for his men, and so we be known well enough; upon which information, and disworship to my Lord, that twain of his men should debate so near him, contrary to the King's peace, considered of my Lord and my Lady and their Counsel, my Lord sent for me and Sir Gilbert Debenham to come to him to Framlingham both; and as it fortuned well my Mother came to me to Cotton not half an hour before that the messenger came to me from my Lord, which was late upon Tuesday last past at night, and the next day on the morning I rode to my lord to Framlingham, and so did Sir Gilbert also, and as soon as we were come, we were sent for to come to my Lord, and when we came to my Lord, he desired of us both that we should neither gather no fellowship, but such men as we had gathered, that we should send them home again,

and that the Court should be continued (*put off*) into the time that my Lord, or such as he would assign had spoken both with you, and Yelverton, and Jenney; and that one indifferent man, chosen by us both, should be assigned to keep the place into the time that ye and they were spoken with.

And then I answered my Lord and said, how that at that time I had my master within the Manor of Cotton, which was my Mother, and into the time that I had spoken with her, I could give none answer; and so my Lord sent Richard Fulmerston, bearer hereof, to my Mother this day for an answer, which answer he should bring to my Lord to London; for my Lord rode to London ward as yesterday, and the sooner because he trusted to have a good end of this matter and all others betwixt you, which he taketh for a great worship to him ward, and a great advantage both, and he could bring this matter about, for then he would trust to have your service, all which were to him great treasure and advantage.

And this was the answer that my Mother and I gave him, that at the instance of my Lord and my Lady we would do thus much as for to put the Court in continuance, and no more to receive of the profits of the Manor than we had, and had distressed for, till into the time that she and I had word again from my Lord and you; if so were that they would neither make entries nor distrain the tenants, nor keep no Court more than we would do, and we told Richard Fulmerston that this my Mother and I did at the instance and great request of my Lord, because my Lord intended peace, which reasonably we would not he against, and yet we said we knew well that we should have no thank of you, when ye knew of it, without it were because we did it at my Lord's instance; but before this answer we had received as much silver, full nigh, as Richard Calle sent us books of, for to gather it by; and as for the possession of the place, we told him that we would keep it: and Sir Gilbert agreed, so that Yelverton and Jenney would do the same, for it was

time for him to say so, for my Lord told him that he would set him fast by the feet else, to be sure of him, that he should make none insurrections into the time that my Lord came again from London.

I ween, and so doth my Mother both, that this appointment was made in good time, for I was deceived of better than an hundred men and an half, that I had promise of to have come to me when I sent for them, this promise had I before that I sent to you the last Letter the day after Saint Michael. Jenney heard say that I kept Cotton, and he rode to Nacton, and there held a Court, and received the profits of the Manor.

I beseech you that I may have knowledge in haste from you how ye will that I be demeaned in this matter and in all others, and I shall apply me to fulfil your intent in them to my power by the grace of God, whom I beseech have you in guiding, and send you your heart's desire. Written at Hemnale's Hall, in Cotton, the Thursday next before Saint Faith.

My Mother recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to hold her excused that she writeth not to you at this time, for she may have no leisure; the bearer hereof shall inform you, whether Jenney will agree to this appointment or not, I think he dare do none otherwise.

Your Son and lowly Servant,
JOHN PASTON.

130. DRAYTON AND HELLESDON RUINED BY SUFFOLK'S MEN (OCT., 1465)

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that I was at Hellesdon upon Thursday last past, and saw the place there, and in good faith there will no creature think how foully and horribly it is arrayed but if they saw it; there cometh much people daily to wonder thereupon, both of Norwich and

of other places, and they speak shamefully thereof; the Duke had by better than a thousand pound that it had never been done, and ye have the more good will of the people, that it is so foully done; and they made your Tenants of Hellesdon and Drayton with other to help to break down the walls of the place and the Lodge both, God knoweth full evil against their wills, but that they durst none other wise do for fear; I have spoken with your Tenants of Hellesdon and Drayton both, and put them in comfort as well as I can; the Duke's men ransacked the Church, and bare away all the good[1] that was left there, both of ours and of the Tenants, and left not so much but that they stood upon the high Altar and ransacked the Images, and took away such as they might find, and put away the Parson out of the Church till they had done; and ransacked every man's house in the town five or six times, and the chief masters of robbing was the Bailiff of Eye, the Bailiff of Stradbrook, Thomas Slyford, and Porter; and Slyford was the chief robber of the Church, and he hath most of the robbery next the Bailiff of Eye; and as for lead, brass, pewter, iron, doors, gates, and other stuff of the house, men of Cossey and Causton have it, and that they might not carry they have hewn it asunder in the most dispiteous wise; if it might be, I would some men of worship might be sent from the King to see how it is, both there and at the Lodge [at Drayton], ere than any Snows come, that they may make report of the truth, else it shall not more be seen so plainly as it may now; and at the reverence of God speed your matters now, for it is too horrible a cost and trouble that we have now daily, and must have till it be otherwise; and your men dare not go about to gather up your livelihood, and we keep here (*Astley's?*) daily more than thirty persons for salvation of us and the place, for in very truth, and the place had not been kept strong, the Duke had come hither.

Arblaster thinketh verily that Hugh a Fenn may do

[1] Cf. G. 615 for an inventory. Bows and guns had been stored in the church.

much in your matters, and he thinketh he will do for you faithfully if ye will, &c.

At the reverence of God, if any worshipful and profitable mean may be taken in your matters, forsake it not in eschewing of our trouble and great costs and charges that we have, and may grow hereafter; it is thought here that if my Lord of Norfolk would take upon him for you, and that he may have a Commission for to enquire of such riots and robberies as hath been done to you and other in this country, that then all the country will await upon him, and serve your intent, for the people loveth and dreadeth him more than any other Lord, except the King and my Lord of Warwick, &c.

God have you in his blessed keeping, and send us good tidings from you. Written in haste, upon the Sunday Saint Simon and Jude's Even.

By yours
MARGARET PASTON.

131. PASTON *FEY* IN THE FLEET (Sept., 1465)

[This letter, which begins and closes with jest, was written soon after Margaret Paston had visited her husband in prison. See Nos. 23 and 157.]

To my Cousin (*for wife;* by a slip, or for safer carriage)
Margaret Paston.

MINE own dear sovereign Lady, I recommend me to you, and thank you of the great cheer that ye made me here to my great cost and charge and labour. No more at this time, but that I pray you ye will send me hither two ells of worsted for Doublets, to happe me (*wrap me up warm*) this cold winter; and that ye enquire where William Paston bought his Tippet of fine worsted, which is almost like silk, and if that be much finer, than that ye should buy me after seven or eight shillings, then buy me a quarter and the nail thereof for Collars, though it be dearer than the other, for I would make my doublet all worsted for worship of Norfolk, rather than like Gonner's doublet.

Item, as for the matter of the nine score pounds asked by my Lady of Bedford for the manor of West Thurrok, whereas Sir Thomas Howys saith that he hath no writing thereof, but that Sir John Fastolf purchased the said manor, and paid certain money in earnest, and afterwards granted his bargain to the Duke of Bedford, and so the money that he took was for the money that he had paid; peradventure Sir Thomas Howys hath writing thereof, and knoweth it not; for if there be any such money paid upon any bargain he shall find it in Kyrtling's books that was Sir John Fastolf's Receiver, and it was about such time as the Duke of Bedford was last in England, which, as it is told me, was the 8th year of King Harry V. (1420), or the 8th year of King Harry VI. (1429), and the sum that he paid for the said bargain was 300 marks (200*l.*) Also, he shall find the 22d year of King Harry (VI.) or there about (1443), in the accounts of one of Fastolf's Receivers at London, that there was taken of Sir Thomas Tyrell, and of the Duchess of Exeter, that was wife to Sir Lewis Johnes, Farmer of the said manor, certain money for repayment of part of the said 300 marks. Also he shall find in years after that, or that year, or thereabouts that Sir John Fastolf received money of my Lord Rivers that now is, by the name of Richard Wydvile (*as he then was*), for his own debt due to Sir John Fastolf; wherefore, if Sir Thomas be true to his master[1] let him do his devoir to make that Worcester, which is upheld by him with the dead's goods, be true to his master, or else it is time for Sir Thomas to forsake him, and help to punish him, or men must say that Sir Thomas is not true; and moreover let Sir Thomas examine what he can find in this matter that I sent him word of, which matter he shall find in the said receiver's book, if he list to seek it.

Item, on the day after your departing, I received letters by William Roos from your sons to me, and to Richard Calle, &c.

[1] *I.e.* Fastolfe. Howes and Worcester were combining against Paston.

Item, I shall tell you a tale,
Pampyng and I have picked your male (*trunk*)
And taken out Pieces five,
For upon trust of Calle's promise, we may soon unthrive,
And, if Calle bring us hither twenty pound,
Ye shall have your pieces again, good and round;
Or else, if he will not pay you the value of the pieces, there
To the post do nail his ear,
Or else do him some other wrongs,
For I will no more in his default borrow;
And but if the receiving of my livelode be better plied
He shall Christ's curse and mine [have] clean tried;
And look ye be merry and take no thought,
For this rhyme is cunningly wrought,
My Lord Percy[1] and all this house
Recommend them to you, dog, cat and mouse,
And wish ye had been here still,
For they say ye are a good gill (*an agreeable companion*).
No more to you at this time,
But God him save that made this rhyme,
Written the of Saint Mathe,
By your true and trusty husband J. P.

The Fleet contained many apartments, and men who could pay might live as if in lodgings, so long as they did not try to escape. This system continued till the 19th century, *cf.* Dickens *passim*.

132. A Friend at Norwich offers Shelter to Mistress Paston (Nov., 1465)

To my worshipful Cousin, John Paston.

Right worshipful Cousin, I commend me to you, and for as much as there was a child dead at Astleys, and another like to be dead in the same place, what time that I rode out about my little livelihood my Lady and I both thought pity on my mistress your wife to see her abide there, and desired her to come to

[1] Heir of the Earl of Northumberland, who was slain at Towton, in prison as a Lancastrian.

my poor house unto such time as ye should a be (*have been*) otherwise avised (*decided*), which if it please you I am right well apaied.

Sythen I understand by my Lady that ye desire to know whether that I should abide here still or not, as to that, I have none other place that I would abide at; and my Lady saith how she is advised to end her life here; also she saith how ye desire to have a Stable within my place; and as to that, a faith Sir, I have none, but that must needs serve for my wood; as for a Chamber, ye shall have one for your men all ready; and as touching a stable, Sir John Sparham and I have gotten you one there (*where*) your horse stood the last time ye were in this town, and an house to lay in hay and straw, and cost you not but making of a rack and a manger, and more to your ease there than here; and if ye will that it be made ready for you, send word by the bringer of this Letter. And, Cousin, as touching to payment, I cannot say how ye shall be pleased with my poor fare, but after that ye are come home and are acquainted therewith, we shall so accord as shall be pleasure to us both, with the grace of God, which have [you] in his blessed governance, and send you your Mother's blessing.

Written at Norwich, on St. Martin's Even (10 *Nov.*).

Your poor Cousin and Friend

JOHN WYMONDHAM.

And how that ever ye do,
hold up your manship.

John Paston was, however, kept in London and died there, May, 1466. His mother had become reconciled to him July, 1465 (*cf.* G. 596).

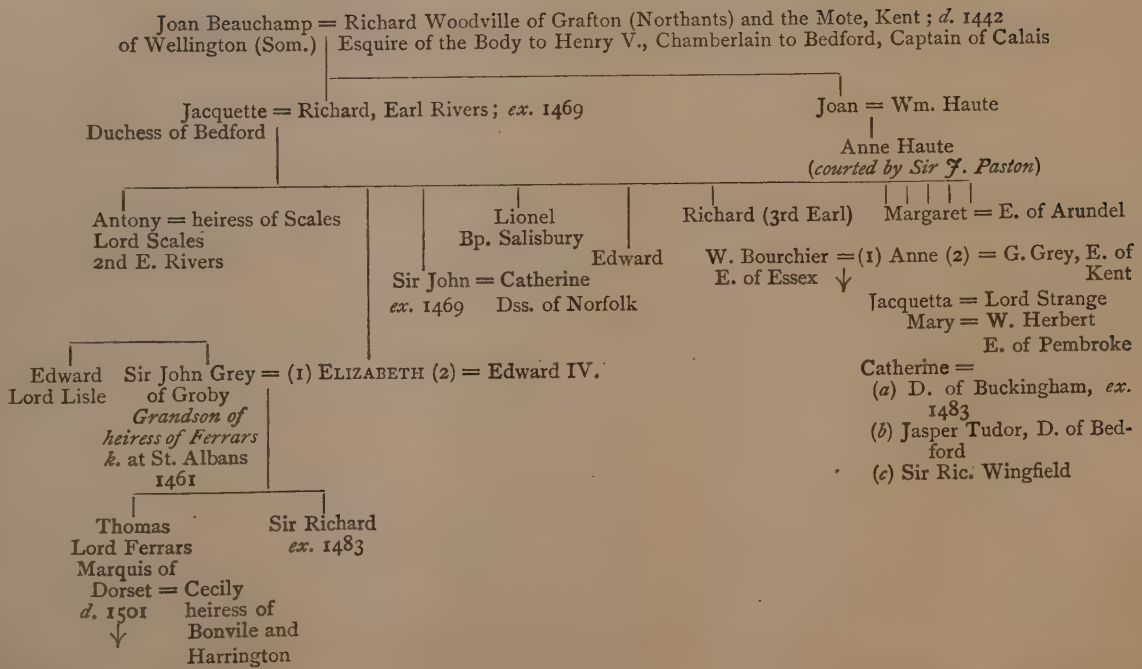
PART VIII

THE EARLY CAREERS OF SIR JOHN PASTON AND HIS BROTHER, JOHN, THE YOUNGEST

John Paston, husband of Margaret, died in 1466, and was buried magnificently at Bromholm Priory.

Their eldest son, John, was knighted by Edward IV. in 1463, succeeded his father as head of the family, 1466, and died, unmarried, 1479.

FAMILY OF QUEEN ELIZABETH WOODVILLE


Joan Beauchamp of Wellington (Som.) = Richard Woodville of Grafton (Northants) and the Mote, Kent; d. 1442
Esquire of the Body to Henry V., Chamberlain to Bedford, Captain of Calais
Jacquette Duchess of Bedford = Richard, Earl Rivers; ex. 1469
Joan = Wm. Haute
Anne Haute (courted by Sir J. Paston)
Antony = heiress of Scales Lord Scales 2nd E. Rivers
Lionel Bp. Salisbury
Edward
Sir John = Catherine ex. 1469 Dss. of Norfolk
Richard (3rd Earl)
Margaret = E. of Arundel
W. Bourchier = (1) Anne (2) = G. Grey, E. of Kent
E. of Essex
Jacquetta = Lord Strange
Mary = W. Herbert E. of Pembroke
Catherine =
(a) D. of Buckingham, ex. 1483
(b) Jasper Tudor, D. of Bedford
(c) Sir Ric. Wingfield
Edward Lord Lisle
Sir John Grey of Groby = (1) ELIZABETH (2) = Edward IV.
Grandson of heiress of Ferrars
k. at St. Albans 1461
Thomas Lord Ferrars Marquis of Dorset = Cecily heiress of Bonvile and Harrington
d. 1501
Sir Richard ex. 1483

PART VIII

133. Paston's Eldest Son, John, at the Court of Edward IV. (1461)

To my right reverend and worshipful Father John Paston, Esquire, dwelling in Hellesdon, be this letter delivered in haste.

Most reverend and worshipful Father, I recommend me heartily, and submit me lowlily to your good fatherhood, beseeching you for charity of your daily blessing; I beseech you to hold me excused that I sent to you none erst (*no earlier*) no writing, for I could not speed to mine intent, that ye sent to me for. I have laboured daily my Lord of Essex, Treasurer of England, to have moved the King, both of the Manor [of] Dedham, and of the Bill, copied of the Court Roll, every morning afore he went to the King, and often times enquired of him, and he had moved the King in these matters; he answered me nay, saying it was no time, and said he would it were as fain sped as I myself; so oft times delaying me that in truth I thought to have sent you word, that I feeled by him that he was not willing to move the King therein; nevertheless I laboured to him continually, and prayed Berners his man to remember him of it. I told often times to my said Lord that I had a man tarrying in town, that I should have sent to you for other sundry matters, and he tarryed for nothing, but that I might send you by him an answer of the said matters; other times beseeching him to speed me in those matters for this cause that ye

should think no default in me for remembering in the said matters.

And now of late, I remembering him of the same matter, inquired if he had moved the King's Highness therein, and he answered me, that he had felt and moved the King therein, rehearsing the King's answer therein, how that when he had moved the King in the said manor of Dedham, beseeching him to be your good Lord therein, considering the service and true heart that ye have done, and owe to him, and in especial the right that ye have thereto; he said, he would be your good Lord therein, as he would be to the poorest man in England, he would hold with you in your right, and as for favour, he will not be understood that he shall show favour more to one man than to another, not to one in England.

And as for the Bill, copied of the court roll, when he moved to him of it, he smiled, and said, that such a bill there was, saying that ye would have oppressed sundry of your countrymen of worshipful men, and therefore he kept it still, nevertheless he said he should look it up in haste, and ye should have it.

Berners undertook to me twice or thrice, that he should so have remembered his Lord and Master, that I should have had it within two or three days; he is often times absent, and therefore I have it not yet, when I can get it, I shall send it you, and of the King's mouth, his name that take it him.

I send you home Peacock again, he is not for me; God send grace that he may do you good service, that by estimation is not likely; ye shall have knowledge afterward how he hath demeaned him here with me; I would, saving your displeasure, that ye were delivered of him, for he shall never do you profit nor worship.

I suppose ye understand that the money that I had of you at London may not endure with me till that the King go into Wales and come again, for I understand it shall be long ere he come again, wherefore I have sent to London to mine Uncle Clement to get

an hundred Shillings of Christopher Hanson your servant, and send it me by my said Servant, and mine harness with it, which I left at London to make clean.

I beseech you not to be displeased with it, for I could make none other chevisance (*borrowing*), but I should have borrowed it of a strange man, some of my fellows, who I suppose should not like you, and ye heard of it another time (*which you would dislike if you heard, etc.*) I am in surety whereas I shall have another man in the stead of Peacock.

My Lord of Essex saith he will do as much for you as for any Esquire in England, and Berners his man telleth me, saying, "your Father is much beholden to my Lord, for he loveth him well;" Berners moved me once, and said that ye must needs do somewhat for my Lord and his; and I said I wist well, that ye would do for him that lay in your power; and he said that there was a little money betwixt you and a Gentleman of Essex called Dyrward, saying, that there is as much between my said Lord and the said Gentleman, of the which money he desireth your part (*that Paston should pay*).

It is talked here how that ye and Howard should have striven together on the Shire day, and one of Howard's men should have stricken you twice with a dagger, and so ye should have been hurt, but for a good doublet, that ye had on at that time; blessed be God, that ye had it on. No more I write to your good fatherhood at this time, but Almighty God have you in his keeping, and send you victory of your Enemies, and worship increasing to your life's ending.

Written at Lewes, on Saint Bartholomew's Even (23 *Aug.*).

By your Servant and Elder Son,

JOHN PASTON.

Henry Bourchier, Lord Bourchier, was created Earl of Essex in 1461. He was a very able man, and at different times filled most of the great offices of state. He had married a sister of Richard Duke of York. One of his brothers married a Berners of West Horsley, Surrey. (*from* F.). His son married a Woodville.

134. Young John at Court: short of Money (1461)

To my right worshipful and reverend Master John Paston, at Norwich.

Right worshipful and my right honourable Master, I recommend me lowly to you, and please your mastership to weet that my Master Clement your brother and Playters wrote a letter to my master your son yesterday, the tenor of which was how ye were entreated there, and as ye desired me, so I informed them the matter along, for they wist not of it till I told them, and they wrote the more plainerly in as much as a worshipful man rode the same day, and bare the letter to my said master your son.

The Lord Bourchier is with the King, and my Lord Warwick still in the North, &c.

Item, Sir this day came one John Waynfleet from the King strait way, and he is of mine acquaintance; and he told me there was no voice nor speaking about the King of that matter, and I told him all the matter along how ye were entreated, which he will put in remembrance in any place that he cometh in in Suffolk or Essex as he goeth homewards, for he oweth no good will to your adversary. And the said Waynfleet told me that he knoweth for certain the King cometh not into Norfolk till he hath been upon the Marches of Wales, and so there is no certainty of his coming this many days; he told me he left the King with a small fellowship about him.

And I enquired [of] him of the guiding of my master, your son, which he commended greatly, and said that he stood well in conceit, and daily should increase; and he was well in acquaintance, and beloved with gentlemen about the King; but he said there shall nothing hurt him, but your straitness of money to him, for without he have money in his purse, so as he may reasonably spend among them, else they will not set by him; and there be Gentlemen's sons of less reputation, that hath money more liberal ten times than he hath;

and so in that the said Waynfleet said it were full necessary for you to remember, &c.

As for tidings here be none new, &c. I trust I shall bring you a letter from my Master your son or than (*when*) I come, for which I shall rather than fail abide one day the longer; and Jesu have you, my right honourable Master, in his merciful governance, and preserve you from adversity. Written at London on St. Bartholomew's even.

I can speak with no man but that think the guiding of your adversary [Howard] hath been in many causes right strange, and as it is supposed, that he shall understand at the Parliament, but for God's sake have men enough about you, for ye understand his unmannerly disposition.

Your beadsman and servant,

JOHN RUSSE.

135. UNCLE CLEMENT'S OPINION

To his right reverend and worshipful Brother John Paston.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful brother I recommend me to your good brotherhood, desiring to hear of your welfare and good prosperity, the which I pray God increase to his pleasure and your heart's ease, certifying you that I have spoken with John Russe, and Playters spoke with him both (*also*) on Friday before Saint Bartholomew; he told us of Howard's guiding, which made us right sorry, till we heard the conclusion that ye had none harm.

Also I understand by William Peacock that my Nephew had knowledge thereof also upon Saturday next before Saint Bartholomew, in the King's House; notwithstanding upon the same day Playters and I wrote Letters unto him, rehearsing all the matter for cause if there were any questions moved to him thereof, that he should tell the truth, in case that the questions were moved by any worshipful man, and [we] named

my Lord Bourchier[1] for my Lord Bourchier was with the King at that time.

I feel by William Peacock that my Nephew is not yet verily acquainted in the King's House; nor with the Officers of the King's House; he is not taken as none of that House, for the Cooks be not charged to serve him, nor the Sewer[2] to give him no dish, for the Sewer will not take no men no dishes 'till they be commanded by the Controller; also he is not acquainted with nobody but with Wykes,[3] and Wykes had told him that he would bring him to the King, but he hath not yet done so; wherefore it were best for him to take his leave and come home, till ye had spoken with some body to help him forth, for he is not bold enough to put forth himself; but then I considered that if he should now come home, the King would think that when he should do him any service, it were that then ye would have him home, the which should cause him not to be had in favour; and also men would think that he were put out of service. Also William Peacock telleth me that his money is spent, and not riotously, but wisely and discreetly, for the costs is greater in the King's House when he rideth (*is travelling*) than ye weened it had been, as William Peacock can tell you; and therefore we must get him one hundred Shillings at the least, as by William Peacock's saying, and yet that will be too little, and I wot well we cannot get forty pence of Christopher Hanson, so I shall be fain to lend it him of mine own silver; if I knew verily your intent were that he should come home, I would send him none; therefore I will do as me thinketh ye should be best pleased, and that me thinketh is to send him the silver; therefore I pray you [as] hastily as ye may send me again five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and the remanent I trow I shall get upon Christopher Hanson and Loket. I pray you send me it as hastily as ye may, for I shall

[1] Eldest son of the Earl of Essex, Cousin to Edward IV. (F.)

[2] An officer who had the ordering of the dishes, &c. (F.)

[3] John Wykes was an usher of the King's chamber and a friend and cousin of John Paston's. (F.)

leave my self right bare, and I pray you send me a Letter how ye will that he shall be demeaned. Written on Tuesday after Saint Bartholomew, &c. Christus vos conservet!

By

CLEMENT PASTON.

136. JOHN STILL SHORT OF MONEY (1462)

To mine right reverend and worshipful Father John Paston, being in the Inner Temple.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you of your blessing and good fatherhood. Please it you to understand the great expense that I have daily travelling with the King, as the bearer hereof can inform you, and how long that I am like to tarry here in this country ere I may speak with you again, and how I am charged to have mine horse and harness ready, and in hasty wise, beseeching you to consider these causes, and so to remember me that I may have such things as I may do my master service with and pleasure, trusting in God it shall be to your worship and to mine avail, in especial I beseech you, that I may be sure where to have money somewhat before Easter either of you, or by mine Uncle Clement when need is, of other causes the bearer hereof can inform you. No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Written at Stamford, the 13th day of March.

By your Son and Servant

JOHN PASTON, the older.

137. SHIPS FOR THE NAVY: THE COMMAND OF THE *MARY TALBOT* STIRS RIVALRY (1462)

To my most reverend and worshipful Master John Paston, dwelling at Hellesdon, be this delivered.

Ihs

MOST reverend and worshipful master, I recommend me unto your good mastership, please you to have

knowledge, on the Friday at afternoon next after Saint Peter, there was at the Tavern in London old Debenham and young Debenham, Thomas Edmonds and I; and there the said Thomas Edmonds fell in communication with old Debenham, and said that my Lord Treasurer had put him to a great charge for the victualling of [the] Mary Talbot, saying to old Debenham, that he heard say that he had a hundred Bullocks to sell, the which the said Edmonds will buy so that they may accord of the price; then the said old Debenham answered again and said, he would, so that he might have good payment, or else the said Edmonds to be bound in an obligation to pay him at such days as they might accord; anon upon this same language, young Debenham spake to his Father, "Sir I pray you that ye will take avisement of (*put off*) this matter till to-morrow, for I trust to your good fatherhood that ye will let me have certain of the bullocks for the victualling of the Barge of Yarmouth, and I shall find you sufficient surety for the payment thereof for Edmonds, I will that ye know that I have been there and spoke with the owner and with the master of the said barge, and they know my appointment."

Then the said Edmonds answered to young Debenham, and told him that the City of Norwich and Yarmouth hath granted, and sent writing to the King and to the Lords, that they will man and victual the said barge of their own costs from the time of her going out till her coming home; and thus the said Edmonds told him that my Lord Treasurer and all the Lords that be at London think they do right well their devoir and be worthy much thank of the King, "well," quoth young Debenham, "I had in commandment for to have the rule of the said barge, and I will be at Yarmouth this day four days, and man her and bring her down to the Giles of Hull, for that is my ship."

Also, he said more, without that he might have the said barge, he will not go to sea but himself and his twenty-four men, and thus, if please your mastership, he departed from the Tavern; and at his departing he told

the said Thomas Edmonds, "This is Paston's labour"; then the said Edmonds answered him again, and said plainly he was to blame for to report so of your mastership, for he knoweth verily he said untruely of you and of my master your son both, and thereon he would have taken an oath; and so, if it please your good mastership, let the City of Norwich and Yarmouth have knowledge of his great cracking and boasts, and let (*hinder*) him of his purpose by the authority that they have.

Item, my master your son will have to his Jackets (*livery of his men*) Murrey and Tawney (*dark red and orange*), and that it please you some of my fellowship may speak to one of the Drapers for to ordain it against his coming home, for I trow it shall be this day fev'night ere he cometh home.

Item, Sir, if please you, Scroop hath sent to you to London by Bingham for the money that ye know of; yet I spake not with him, but I shall tell him that I suppose ye will be here in the last end of the term, and I shall send your mastership word what answer I have of him.

Item, Sir if please, such tidings as I hear of, I send you word, my Lord of Warwick hath been in Scotland and taken a castle of the Scots, and upon this there came the Queen[1] of Scots with other Lords of her Country, as ye shall hear the names, in embassy to my said Lord of Warwick, and a truce is taken betwixt this and Saint Bartholomew's day in August, these is the last tidings that I know. No more to your good mastership at this time, but Jesu have [you] in his keeping. Written on the Saturday next after Saint Peter (29 *June*).

By your poor servant,

J. DAUBENEY.

[1] Mary, daughter of Arnold, Duke of Gelders, and Mother to James III., King of Scotland. She was a woman of heroic valour, and took an active part in the government with the Regents during the minority of her Son. She died during this year. (F.).

138. Ships for the Navy: Young Debenham out-doing Young Paston (1462)

To my Master, John Paston.

Pleaseth your Mastership to weet, that I was at Scole, and spake with Arblaster and John Sadler, and with other good Yeoman of the Country, to understand how they were guided for the victualling of the Barge of Yarmouth; and I understand by them that their Hundred have paid, nevertheless it is but little, there was gathered in that Hundred eighteen shillings and certain Corn; and [in] some other Hundred six Marks (4*l.*) and corn; and so they have paid in all the Hundreds and Towns hereabouts, that is to say, East Flegg and West Flegg, and up to Blofield, Tunstead, and up to Stalham, I understand by the commission that Debenham hath, it is more large than Master John's, as ye shall understand, whereof I send you a Copy, which causeth me that I labour no farther therein, notwithstanding your mastership shall have knowledge what every Hundred gives and Yarmouth, both.

Written at Winterton, the morrow after I departed from your mastership.

Your poor Beadsman,
Richard Calle.

139. Ships for the Navy: Paston too slow again

To my Master John Paston, the younger, be this delivered.

Sir, I have received your Letter, wherein I understand that my master desired that my master your brother might have the guiding and governance of the Barge of Yarmouth; as to that, and men of Yarmouth had known my master's intent a fortnight ago he had been sure of it, but now it is so that Debenham hath a Commission of the King, expressed only for that ship named in his Commission, and he hath been here at Yarmouth, and spoken with the Bailiff and with the

owners of the said ship, and taken such a direction that they may grant it no man but him ; and moreover he hath indented with the owners of the ship what day it shall be ready, as well victualled as manned ; and also he hath brought down Letters from my Lord Treasurer to all Priors[1] and Gentlemen in this Country to help him and assist him to victual and man the said ship, and his men is here daily, and goeth about and gathereth wheat, malt, money, and whatsoever any man will give. The blessed Trinity preserve you. Written at Caister, the Friday next after I received your Letter.

Item, it is talked here that my master your brother and Debenham were at words at London, and that Debenham should have stricken him had not Howard a been [there] whereof I am right sorry. Nevertheless I trust to God all shall be well.

Your Servant
RICHARD CALLE.

140. JOHN SENDS TREACLE OF GENOA

To Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it you to weet that I send you by Barker, the bearer hereof, three treacle pots of Geane (*Genoa*), as my Apothecary sweareth unto me, and moreover that they were never undone since they came from Geane, whereof ye shall take as many as pleaseth you, nevertheless my Brother John sent to me for two, therefore I must beseech you that he may have at the least one ; there is one pot that is marked under the bottom two times, with these letters M. P., which pot I have best trust unto, and next him to the wry pot, and I mistrust most the pot that hath a krott above on the top, lest that he hath been undone ; and also the other two pots be printed with the Merchant's mark two times over the covering, and that other pot is but once marked but with one print, notwithstanding I had like oath and promise for one as well as for all.

JOHN PASTON.

[1] Priors of St. John always helped in military defence.

141. Margaret Paston's Anxiety (1463)

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, be this Letter delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, please you to weet that I received a Letter from you on the Sunday next after Twelfth day, which was sent by a Priest of St. Gregory's parish of Norwich; and whereas ye marvelled I sent you no writings of such Letters as ye sent me before, I sent you an answer of the substance of such matters as ye have written of to me before (*by Playters*) the which he told me a sent them to you to London. And as touching the errands that ye sent to me for to do to Richard Calle, I have done as ye commanded me to do, and called upon him therefore, both before your writing, and sithen; he therefore have none excuse for default of leisure, for he hath been but right little here since ye departed hence; he is out at this time, and when that he cometh home I shall make him make you a clear bill of the receipt of your livelihood, and Fastolf's both; and I shall send you a clear bill of my receipts, and also of my payments out thereof again; and as for such errands that should be done to Sir Thomas Howes, I have shewed Richard Calle your writing, and told him your intent, as for such things as ye would he should say to him on his own head. Also I have done your errands to my mother and to my Cousin Clere after your writing. Item, I have spoken to John Adam and to Playters of your intent of the last bill that ye sent me, and they say they will do after your intent as much as they may, and ye shall have an answer thereof in haste.

Item, Sir Robert Coniers dined with me this day, and shewed me a letter that came from the King to him, desiring him that he should await upon his well-beloved brother the Duke of Suffolk, at Norwich on Monday next coming, for to be at the Election of Knights of the Shire; and he told me that every gentleman of Norfolk and Suffolk that are of any reputation hath writing from the King in likewise as

he had. I feel him by his saying, that he is right well disposed to you ward; he saith there shall no man make him to be against you in no manner. Skipwith shall tell you such tidings as beeth in this Country, and of Thomas Gorney and of his man[1]; himself is Clerk convict, and his man is hanged; ye shall hear hereafter what they and others were purposed to have done to their master.

I thank you heartily of your writing to me before that John Paston came home, for God knoweth I thought right long till I heard from you; I shall send word in writing of such tidings as we have here on Monday in haste. Dawbeney desireth to weet what time that it please you, that he should come again to you.

My mother and many other folks maketh much of your son John, the elder, and [are] right glad of his coming home, and liketh right well his demeaning. Heydon's son [Harry] hath borne out the side stoutly here this Christmas, and when that he rideth, he hath four or five men with him in Clothing (*livery*); but he hath but little favour in this country, but if it be of the Bishop and of the Prior of Norwich,[2] the said Prior hath granted him the stewardship that his father had, he hath it under the Convent Seal, and Spilman [is] his tutor to learn him how he should be demeaned therein. It is said about Baconsthorp that Harry Heydon should have said, that it were well done that men of the Country should make ready their bald batts and their clouted shoon,[3] and go fetch home their Knights of Shire [Paston and] Berney; and it is promised him that he shall be met withal because of his language. Pray God send us a good world and a peaceable. I shall purvey for all things that ye have sent to me for, so that I ween .

[1] The man had murdered a cousin of the Bishop of Norwich, at his master's command. But Gurney, being of the clergy, could not be punished much.

[2] John Mowth, or Molet, 1453-71, Prior of the Grey Friars of Norwich. (F.)

[3] *Bald batts* seem to mean here ball batts, or batts to play at ball with. *Clouted shoon*, shoes shod with thin plates of iron. (F.)

ye shall be pleased. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Wednesday next before Saint Agnes (21 *Jan.*).

Your

MARGARET PASTON.[1]

142. SIR JOHN KEPT AT HOME BY HIS FATHER: NEIGHBOURS' COMMENTS

To my worshipful Master, Master Paston the eldest.

RIGHT worshipful Master, I recommend me unto your Mastership, and of one matter at reverence of God take heed, for in truth I hear much talking thereof, and that is both in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Norwich among all men of worship, as well that love you as others, and that is of my master, your son Sir John, because he is so at home, and none other wise set for (*provided for*). Some say that ye and he both stand out of the King's good grace, and some say that ye keep him at home for niggardship, and will no thing ware (*spend*) upon him, and so each man say his advice as it please him to talk; and I have enquired, and said the most cause is in part, for cause ye are so much out, that he is the rather at home for the safeguard of the coasts. But at the reverence of God, for eschewing of common language, see that he may worshipfully be set for, either in the King's service, or in marriage; for as for touching the Lady Chamberlayne[2] that matter is done for, I spake with the parson thereof, and I heard by him, that that matter will not pre. (*? will not succeed*).

No more but God speed you as well in all matters, as I would ye should do, I beseech you that this letter be kept secret.

By your beadsman,

R. C. V. C.

[1] N.B. A part of the original letter is torn off, which makes it defective in two or three sentences. (F.)

[2] A wealthy widow, nearly double Sir John's age.

143. Sir John has run away from Home and joined King Edward (1463)

To my well-beloved Son, Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I Greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that I have received a Letter from you, the which ye delivered to Master Roger at Lynn, whereby I conceive that ye think ye did not well that ye departed hence without my knowledge, wherefore I let you weet I was right evil paid with you; your father thought, and thinketh yet, that I was assented to your departing, and that hath caused me to have great heaviness; I hope he will be your good father hereafter, if ye demean you well, and do as ye ought to do to him; and I charge you upon my blessing that in any thing touching your father that should be [to] his worship, profit, or avail, that ye do your devoir and diligent labour to the furtherance therein, as ye will have my good will, and that shall cause your father to be better father to you.

It was told me ye sent him a Letter to London; what the intent thereof was I wot not, but though he take it but lightly, I would ye should not spare to write to him again as lowly as ye can, beseeching him to be your good father; and send him such tidings as be in the country there ye be in, and that ye be ware of your expences better and (*than*) ye have been before this time, and be your own purse-bearer, I trow ye shall find it most profitable to you.

I would ye should send me word how ye do, and how ye have shifted for yourself since ye departed hence, by some trusty man, and that your father have no knowledge thereof; I durst not let him know of the last Letter that ye wrote to me, because he was so sore displeased with me at that time.

Item, I would ye should speak with Wykes,[1] and

[1] Not the king's usher, previously mentioned, but a servant of Paston's. Apparently Jane Walsham did not wed Wykes (or Weekes), but was later "married to a knave," and indebted for some assistance to John the youngest (G. 802).

know his disposition to Jane Walsham, she hath said since he departed hence, but (*unless*) she might have him, she would never [be] married, her heart is sore set on him ; she told me that he said to her, that there was no woman in the world he loved so well ; I would not he should jape (*deceive*) her, for she meaneth good faith ; and if he will not have her, let me weet in haste, for I shall purvey for her in other wise.

As for your harness and geer that ye left here, it is in Daubeney's keeping, it was never removed since your departing, because that he had not the keys, I trow it shall apeyer (*grow worse*) but if it be taken heed at betimes ; your father knoweth not where it is.

I sent your grey horse to Ruston to the farrier, and he saith he shall never be nought to ride, neither right good to plough nor to cart, he said he was splayed, and his shoulder rent from the body, I wot not what to do with him.

Your Grandam would fain hear some tidings from you ; it were well done that ye sent a Letter to her how ye do, as hastily as ye may, and God have you in his keeping, and make you a good man, and give you grace to do well, as I would ye should do.

Written at Caister, the Tuesday next before Saint Edmund the King (20 *November*).

Your Mother

MARGARET PASTON.

I would ye should make much of the Parson of Filby, the bearer hereof, and make him good cheer if ye may.

144. SIR JOHN AT HOME ON GOOD BEHAVIOUR [1459 or 1464 ?]

To my right worshipful Husband John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you, pleaseth you to weet, that on Thursday last was, there were brought unto this town many Privy Seals, and one

of them was indorsed to you, and to Hastyngs, and to five or six other Gentlemen; and another was sent unto your Son, and indorsed to himself alone, and assigned (*signed*) within with the King's own hand; and so were but few that were sent, as it was told me; and also, there were more special terms in his than were in others; I saw a Copy of those that were sent unto other Gentlemen; the intent of the writing was, that they should be with the King at Leicester the 10th day of May, with as many persons defensibly arrayed, as they might according to their degree, and that they should bring with them for their expences for two months.

As for the Letter that was indorsed to you, and to others, it was delivered to William Yelverton, for there appeared no more of the remulaunt (*the rest*).

Hastyngs is forth into Yorkshire; I pray you that ye vouchsafe to send word in haste, how ye will that your Son be demeaned herein. Men think here, that be your well willers, that ye may no less do than to send him forth.

As for his demeaning since ye departed, in good faith, it hath been right good, and lowly, and diligent, in oversight of your servants, and other things, the which I hope ye would have been pleased with, and ye had been at home; I hope he will be well demeaned to please you hereafterward.

He desired Arblaster to be a mean to you for him; and was right heavy of his demeaning to you, as I sent you word also by Arblaster, how I did to him after that ye were gone; and I beseech you heartily, that ye vouchsafe to be his good Father, for I hope he is chastised, and will be the worthier hereafter.

As for all other things at home, I hope that I and others shall do our part therein, as well as we may; but as for money it cometh but slowly, and God have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters.

Written in haste at Norwich on the Sunday next before the Ascension-day.

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Sir, I would be right glad to hear some good tidings from you.

By yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

F. and G. assign this and the following letter to 1459. (*Cf.* G. 377, note.) But the references to the king appear to indicate Edward IV., in 1464 in the North, and the omission in the signature to *No.* 145 *of Kt.* may be due to the writer's momentary humility. If his father sent him no money he would be compelled to come home. There could be no expectation in 1459 of his going to serve Henry VI.

145. SIR JOHN CRAVES PARDON (1464 or 1459)

To my right worshipful Father, John Paston, Esquire, be this Letter delivered in hasty wise.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, in the most lowly wise I commend me to your good fatherhood, beseeching you of your blessing; might it please your fatherhood to remember and consider the pain and heaviness that it hath been to me since your departing out of this country, here abiding till the time it please you to shew me grace, and till the time that by report my demeaning be to your pleasing; beseeching you to consider that I may not, nor have no mean to seek you as I ought to do, saving under this form, which I beseech you be not taken to no displeasure, nor am not of power to do any thing in this country for worship or profit of you, nor ease of your tenants which might and should be to your pleasing; wherefore I beseech you of your fatherly pity to tender the more this simple writing; as I shall out of doubt hereafter do that shall please you to the uttermost of my power and labour; and if there be any service that I may do, if it please you to command me, or if I may understand it, I will be as glad to do it as any thing earthly, if it were any thing that might be to your pleasing. And no more, but Almighty God have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, the 5th day of March.

By your elder Son,
JOHN PASTON.

146. JOHN, THE YOUNGEST, IN THE DUKE OF NORFOLK'S HOUSEHOLD (Nov., 1462)

To my right reverend and worshipful Father, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you lowly of your blessing. Please it you to have knowledge, that my Lord is purposed to send for my Lady, and is like to keep his Christmas here in Wales (*Holt, Denbigh*); for the King hath desired him to do the same, wherefore I beseech you, that you would vouchsafe to send me some money by the bearer hereof: for, in good faith, as it is not unknown to you, that I had but two Nobles in my purse, which that Richard Calle took me by your commandment, when I departed from you out of Norwich.

The Bearer hereof should buy me a Gown with part of the money, if it please you to deliver him as much money as he may buy it with; for I have but one gown at Framlingham and another here, and that is my Livery Gown, and we must wear them every day for the more part, and one Gown without change will soon be done.

As for tidings, my Lord of Warwick yede forwards into Scotland, as on Saturday last past, with twenty thousand men, and Sir William Tunstall is taken with the garrison of Bamborough[1] and is like to be headed, and by the means of Sir Richard Tunstall his own brother.

As soon as I hear any more tidings, I shall send them you by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping. Written in haste at the Castle of the Holt, upon Holymas day (1 *Nov.*).

Your Son and lowly Servant,

J. PASTON, Junior.

[1] Bamborough Castle, in Northumberland, was taken by Queen Margaret, and garrisoned with Scots. Sir William Tunstall was taken in the garrison on King Edward's part, whilst his brother, Sir Richard, was in the army of Queen Margaret.

147. JOHN, THE YOUNGEST, SERVES IN THE NORTH UNDER NORFOLK (Dec., 1462)

To my right worshipful Brother, John Paston, the elder Son of John Paston, Esquire, be this delivered in haste.

[Queen Margaret obtained Scottish troops by surrendering to them Berwick.]

RIGHT worshipful Brother, I recommend me to you. Please it you to weet, that as this day we had tidings, how that the Scots will come into England within seven days after the writing of this letter, for to rescue these three castles, Alnwick, Dunstanborough, and Bamborough[1]; which Castles were besieged, as on yesterday; and at the Siege of Alnwick lieth my Lord of Kent and the Lord Scales (*Wm. Neville and Anthony Woodville*), and at Dunstanborough Castle lieth the Earl of Worcester and Sir Ralph Grey, and at the Castle of Bamborough lieth the Lord Montague (*John Neville*) and the Lord Ogle, and other divers Lords and Gentlemen, that I know not; and there is [sent] to them out of Newcastle Ordnance, I know, both for the Sieges, and for the Field, in case that there be any field taken (*pitched battle*), as I trow there shall none be not yet, for the Scots keep no promise. My Lord of Warwick (*R. Neville*) lieth at the Castle of Warkworth, but three miles out of Alnwick, and he rideth daily to all these Castles, for to oversee the Sieges; and if they want victuals, or any other thing, he is ready for to purvey it for them to his power. The King commanded my Lord of Norfolk for to conduct victuals, and the ordnance out of Newcastle unto Warkworth Castle to my Lord of Warwick; and so my Lord of Norfolk commanded Sir John Howard, Sir William Peche, Sir Robert Chamberlayne, Ralph Ascheton and me,

[1] In 1462 these fortresses were garrisoned by the Lancastrians; the Yorkists began the sieges in December. Somerset and the heir of Percy yielded Bamborough and Dunstanborough and turned Yorkist on Christmas Eve. The Scots declined battle, but Hungerford cut his way out of Alnwick which then surrendered, 6 Jan., 1463. Edward lay ill of measles at Durham.

Calthrop, and Gorge, and others, for to go forth with the victuals and ordnance unto my Lord of Warwick, and so we were with my Lord of Warwick with the victuals and ordnance as yesterday.

The King lieth at Durham, and my Lord of Norfolk at Newcastle; we have people enough here. In case we abide here, I pray you purvey, that I may have here more money by Christmas Eve at the farthest, for I may get leave for to send none of my waged men home again; no man can get no leave for to go home, but if they steal away, and if they might be known, they shall be sharply punished; make as merry as ye can, for there is no jeopardy towards, not yet, and there be any jeopardy, I shall soon send you word by the grace of God. I wot well ye have more tidings than we have here, but these be true tidings.

Yelverton and Jenney are like for to be greatly punished, for because they came not hither to the King; they are marken well I know, and so is John Bylling-forth and Thomas Playters, wherefore I am right sorry; I pray you let them have weeting thereof, that they may purvey their excuse in haste, so that the King may have knowledge, why that they came not to him in their own persons; let them come, or send their excuse to me in writing, and I shall purvey that the King shall have knowledge of their excuse; for I am well acquainted with my Lord Hastyngs, and my Lord Dacres (*R. Fynes*), which be now greatest about the King's Person; and also I am well acquainted with the younger Mortimer, Ferrers, Hawte, Harpur, Crowmer, and Bosewell of the King's House.

I pray you let my Grandam, and my Cousin Clere have knowledge how that I desired you to let them have knowledge of these tidings in this letter, for I promised for to send them tidings. I pray you let my Mother have knowledge, how that I, and my Fellowship, and your Servants are at the writing of this letter in good hele blessed be God.

I pray you let my Father have knowledge of this letter, and of the other letter, that I sent to my Mother

by Felbrigg's man; and how that I pray both him and my Mother lowly of their blessings.

I pray you that ye will send me some letter how ye do, and of your tidings with you, for I think long that I hear no word from my Mother and you.

I pray you that this bill may recommend me to my Sister Margery, and to my Mistress Joan Gayne, and to all good Masters and Fellows within Caister.

I sent no letter to my Father, never since I departed from you, for I could get no man to London and never since.

I pray you, in case ye speak with my Cousin Margaret Clere, recommend me to her; and Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Newcastle on Saturday next after the Conception of our Lady (10 *Dec.*).

Your,

JOHN PASTON, the youngest.

I pray you let Richard Calle see this letter.

148. COMMISSIONS IN LONDON FROM JOHN THE YOUNGEST (1465)

To my Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered in haste, at London.

Mistress Paston was visiting her husband in the Fleet prison, her sons holding Hellesdon.

AFTER all humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing, please it you to weet that I have sent to my Father to have an answer of such matters as I have sent to him for in haste, of which matters the greatest of substance is for the Manor of Cotton, beseeching you to remember him of the same matter, that I may have an answer in the most hasty wise.

Also I pray you that mine Aunt Poynings may be desired to send me an answer of such matters as she woteth of, by him that shall bring me an answer of the matter of Cotton.

Also Mother, I beseech you that there may be purveyed some mean that I might have sent me home by the same messenger two pair of Hose, one pair black, and another pair of russet, which be ready made for me at the Hosier's with the crooked back, next to the Black Friar's-Gate, within Ludgate; John Pamping knoweth him well enough I suppose, and the black hose be paid for he will send me the russet unpaid for; I beseech you that this gear be not forgotten, for I have not an whole hose for to do on; I trow they shall cost both pair 8*s*.

My Brother, and my Sister Anne, and all the garrison of Hellesdon fare well, blessed be God, and recommend them to you ever each one.

I pray you visit the Rood of Northdoor (*of St. Paul's*) and St. Saviour, at Bermondsey, among while ye abide in London, and let my Sister Margery go with you to pray to them that she may have a good Husband ere she come home again; and now I pray you send us some tidings, as ye were wont to command me; and the Holy Trinity have you in keeping; and my fair Mistress of the Fleet. Written at Norwich, on Holy Rood Day (14 *Sept.*).

Your Son and lowly Servant
JOHN PASTON, the youngest.

149. ORDERS FROM THE DUKE OF NORFOLK (1465)

John Mowbray was the last Duke of Norfolk of that name, and married Elizabeth, daughter of that renowned warrior John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury; he died suddenly at Framlingham Castle, in Suffolk, on Wednesday the 17th of January, 1475. (F.) His little daughter and heiress was married to the younger son of Edward IV., but died young, and the Mowbray direct line was thus extinct.

To our trusty and entirely beloved Servant John Paston, Esq. [*the youngest*].

The Duke of Norfolk.

RIGHT well-beloved Servant, I greet you heartily well, certifying that we shall be at full age on Friday next coming, wherefore, well counselled by the Lords of our

Counsel and other of our Counsel, that ye, one of our Servants of household, with others, be with us at London on Friday or Saturday next coming at the furthest to accompany us then to our worship, for we shall have then livery of our Lands and Offices, and that ye fail us not, as ye will have our good Lordship in time coming, and also that ye do warn our Feedmen and Servants, such as be nigh to you, that they be there then in our Livery. Written the 12th day of October.

NORFOLK.

PART IX

THE SONS' FIRST STRUGGLE FOR THE FASTOLFE INHERITANCE, 1466–9

Their father died, apparently in the Fleet, in May, 1466. Sir John remained at Court, cultivating the Bourchiers, the Woodvilles, and Lord Hastings, in turns; John the youngest stayed in Norfolk and sustained a siege, in Caister, by the Duke's men. Nominally he was still a retainer of the Duke or Duchess of Norfolk.

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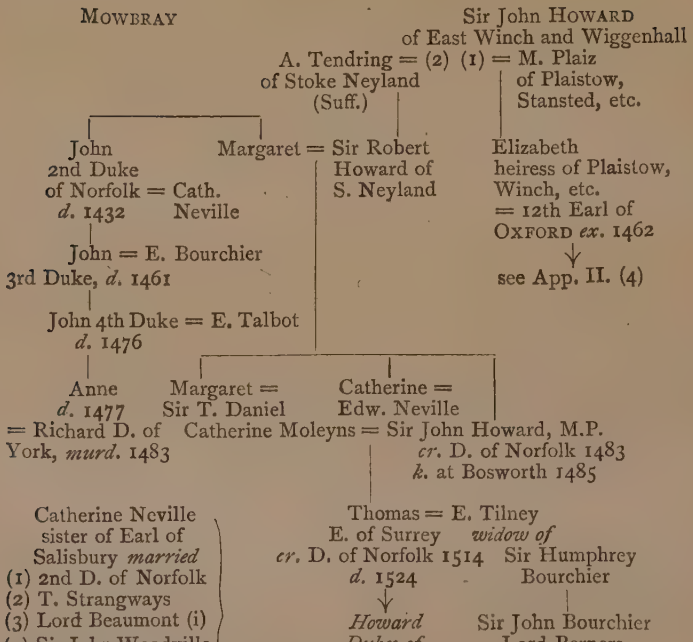

PART IX

150. Sir John advised by his Mother (Oct., 1466)

To my right worshipful Master, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this Letter delivered in haste.

I Greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, desiring you to send me word how that ye speed in your matters, for I think right long till I hear tidings from you; and in all wise I advise you for to beware that ye keep wisely your writings that be of charge, that it come not in their hands that may hurt you hereafter; your Father, whom God assoil! in his trouble's season, set more by his writings and evidence than he did by any of his moveable goods; remember, that if they were had from you, ye could never get no more such as they be for your part, &c.

Item, I would ye should take heed that if any Process come out against me, or against any of those that were indicted afore the Coroner, that I might have knowledge thereof, and to purvey a remedy therefore.

Item, as for your Father's will, I would ye should take right good counsel therein, as I am informed it may be proved, though no man take no charge this twelvemonth; ye may have a Letter of administration to such as ye will, and administer the goods and take no charge; I advise you that ye in no wise take no charge thereof till ye know more than ye do yet, for ye may verily know, by that your Uncle William said to you and to me, that they will lay the charge upon you and me for more things than is expressed in your Father's will, the which should be too great for you or

me to bear, but as for me I will not be too hasty to take it upon me I assure you; and at the reverence of God, speed your matters so this term, that we may be in rest hereafter, and let not for no labour for the season, and remember the great cost and charge that we have had hithertoward, and think verily it may not long endure; ye know what [money] ye left when ye were last at home, and weet it verily, there is no more in this country to bear out no charge with. I advise you to enquire wisely if ye can get any more there as ye be, for else by my faith, I fear else it will not be well with us; and send me word in haste how ye do, and whether ye have your last deeds that ye failed, for plainly they are not in this country; it is told me in counsel that Richard Calle hath near conquered your Uncle William with fair promise, touching his livelihood and other things, the which should prevail him greatly as he saith; beware of him and of his Fellow by mine advice. God send you good speed in all your matters. Written at Caister, the morrow next after Symon and Jude (28 *Oct.*), where as I would not be at this time but for your sake, so might I choose.

By your Mother
MARGARET PASTON.

151. ADVICE ON COURTING (1467)

To my Brother, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and verily well-beloved Brother, I heartily commend me to you, thanking you of your labour and diligence that ye have in keeping of my place at Caister, so surely both with your heart and mind, to your great business and trouble; and I againward have had so little leisure that I have not sped but few of your errands, nor cannot before this time.

As for my Lady Boleyn's disposition to you ward, I cannot in no wise find her agreeable that ye should have her daughter, for all the privy means that I could make, insomuch I had so little comfort by all the means that I could make, that I disdained in mine own person

to commune with her therein ; nevertheless I understand that she sayeth, "what if he and she can agree I will not let it, but I will never advise her thereto in no wise." And upon Tuesday last past she rode home into Norfolk ; wherefore as ye think ye may find the mean to speak with her yourself, for without that in mine conceit it will not be ; and as for Crosby, I understand not that there is no marriage concluded between them, nevertheless there is great language that it is like to be ; ye be personable, and peradventure your being once in the sight of the maid, and a little discovering of your good will to her, binding her to keep it secret, and that ye can find in your heart with some comfort to her, to find the mean to bring such a matter about, as shall be her pleasure and yours, but that this ye cannot do without some comfort of her in no wise ; and bear yourself as lowly to the Mother as ye list, but to the maid not too lowly, nor that ye be too glad to speed, nor too sorry to fail ; and I always shall be your herald both here, if she come hither, and at home, when I come home, which I hope hastily, within forty days at the farthest ; my Mother hath a Letter which can tell you more, and ye may let Daubeney see it.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

I suppose and ye call well upon R. Calle he shall purvey you money, I have written to him enough.

Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, was Lord Mayor of London in 1457–8. He died in 1463, leaving Anne, the daughter of Thomas Lord Hoo and Hastings, his widow, by whom he had three daughters, Isabel, Anne, and Alice, the last of these was the Lady to whom J. Paston wished to pay his addresses, and who afterwards married Sir John Fortescue, knight. The elder married William Cheyney, Esq., and the other became the wife of Sir Henry Heydon, of Baconsthorp, knight, the Pastons' enemy. All were great-aunts to Anne Boleyn, the Mother of Queen Elizabeth.

152. FRIAR BRACKLEY'S TESTIMONY TO THEIR FATHER'S HONESTY. LADY BOLEYN (1467)

John Paston, to his Brother Sir John Paston.

SIR, please it you to weet that my Mother and I communed this day with Friar Mouth, to understand what

his saying shall be in the court when he cometh up to London, which is in this wise: he say that at such time as he had shriven Master Brackley, and howselled him both, he let him weet that he was informed by divers persons, that the said Master Brackley ought for to be in great conscience for such things as he had done and said, and caused my father, whom God assoil! for to do and say, also in proving of Sir John Fastolf's Will; to whom the said Master Brackley answered thus again; "I am right glad that it cometh to you in mind for to move me with this matter in discharging of my conscience against God;" saying furthermore to the said Friar Mouth, by the way that his soul should to, that the Will that my Father put into the court was as verily Sir John Fastolf's Will, as it was true that he should once die. This was said on the Sunday when the said Brackley weened to have died then; on the Monday he revived again, and was well amended till on the Wednesday, and on the Wednesday he sickened again, supposing to have died forthwith, and in his sickness he called Friar Mouth, which was confessor unto him, of his own motion, saying unto him in this wise, "Sir, whereas of your own motion ye moved me the last day to tell you after my conscience of Sir John Fastolf's Will likewise as I knew; and now of mine own motion, and in discharging of my soul, for I know well that I may not escape, but that I must die in haste, wherefore I desire you that [you] will report after my death, that I took it upon my soul at my dying, that that will that John Paston put in to be proved was Sir John Fastolf's will;" and the said Brackley died the same Wednesday.

And whereas ye would have had Richard Calle to you as on Sunday last past, it was this Tuesday ere I had your Letter; and whereas it pleaseth you for to wish me at Eltham, at the Tournay, for the good sight that was there, by truth I have lever see you once in Caister-hall than to see as many Kings tourney as might be betwixt Eltham and London.

And, Sir, whereas it liketh you to desire to have

knowledge how that I have done with the Lady Boleyn, by my faith I have done nor spoken nought in that matter, nor nought will do till time that ye come home, and ye come not this seven year; notwithstanding the Lady Boleyn was in Norwich in the week after Easter, from the Saturday till the Wednesday, and Heydon's wife and Mistress Alice both, and I was at Caister, and wist not of it; her men said that she had none other errand to the Town but for to sport her, but so God help me, I suppose that she weened I would have been in Norwich for to have seen her daughter; I beseech you with all my heart hie you home, though ye should tarry but a day, for I promise you your folk think that ye have forgotten them, and the most part of them must depart at Whitsuntide at the furthest, they will no longer abide; and as for R. Calle we cannot get half a quarter the money that we pay for the bare household, besides men's wages. Daubeney nor I may no more without coinage.

Your

JOHN PASTON.

Mouth, Prior of the Grey Friars of Norwich, and Brackley were men of much higher character than parson Howes, and their witness must overbear Howes' statement that he had helped Paston to forge the will.

153. SIR JOHN WARNED OF DESIGNS TO SEIZE CAISTER (1467)

To Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that Blickling of Heylesdon came from London this week, and he is right merry, and maketh his boast that within this fortnight of Heylesdon should be both new Lords and new officers; and also this day was brought me word from Caister, that Rysing of Fretton should have heard said in divers places there, as he was in Suffolk, that Fastolf of Cowhawe maketh all the strength that he may, and proposeth him to assault Caister, and to enter there if he may, insomuch

that it is said that he hath a five score men ready, and sendeth daily spies to understand what fellowship keep the place; by whose power, or favour, or supportation, that he will do this, I know not, but you wot well that I have been affrayed (*attacked*) there before this time, when that I had other comfort than I have now; and I cannot well guide nor rule soldiers, and also they set not by a woman as they should set by a man, therefore I would ye should send home your Brother or else Dawbeny to have a rule, and to take in such men as were necessary for the safe-guard of the place, for if I were there, without I had the more sadder or worshipful persons about me, and there come a meny of knaves, and prevailed in their intent, it should be to me but a villany; and I have been about my livelode (*property*) to set a rule therein, as I have written to you, which is not yet all performed after mine desire, and I would not go to Caister till I had done; I will no more days make thereabout if I may, therefore in any wise send some body home to keep the place, and when that I have done and performed that I have begun, I shall purpose me thither-ward, if I should do there any good, and else I had lever be thence.

I have sent to Nicholas, and such as keep the place, that they should take in some fellows to assist and strength them, till ye send home some other word, or some other man to govern them that be therein, &c.

I marvel greatly that ye send me no word how that ye do, for your enemies begin to wax right bold, and that putteth your friends both in great fear and doubt, therefore purvey that they may have some comfort, that they be no more discouraged, for if we lose our friends it shall [be] hard in this troublesome world to get them again.

The blessed Trinity speed you in your matters, and send you the victory of your enemies, to your heart's ease and their confusion.

Written at Norwich, the Saturday next before Relick Sunday (*3rd Sunday after Midsummer*) in haste.

I pray you remember well the matter that I wrote

to you for in the Letter that ye had by James Gresham's man, and send me an answer therof by the next man that cometh, &c.

By your Mother
MARGARET PASTON.

154. BISHOP WAYNFLEET COVETS THE CAISTER PRIESTS' ENDOWMENT FOR HIS [MAGDALEN] COLLEGE AT OXFORD. WORCESTER TRYING TO UNDO HIS FORMER OPPOSITION

To my right worshipful Mistress, Margaret Paston, Widow.

RIGHT worshipful Mistress, after due recommendation, please your good mistresship to weet that I communed late with your entirely well-beloved son, Sir John Paston, if the foundation of my Master Fastolf's College might be at Cambridge, in case it shall not be at Caister, neither at Saint Benet's, because that University lieth near the country of Norfolk and Suffolk; for, all be it my Lord of Winchester is disposed to found a College in Oxford for my said Master to be prayed for, yet with much less cost he might make some other memorial also in Cambridge, and it were of two Clerks and three or four scholars, founded at least with the value of good Benefices and rich Parsonages, that might be purchased the advowsons with much less goods than Lordships or manors may; and I found your Son well disposed to move and excite my said Lord. Also now the Christmas week next before the feast at London, my Lord of Winchester called me to him in presence of Sir John, and desired him effectually to be my good willer; and my Master would have no words rehearsed on my behalf, and he said full well. Would Jesu, Mistress, that my good Master that was some time your husband, in my said Master Fastolf's life days, as he shewed to me, then could have found in his heart to have trusted and loved me as my Master Fastolf did, and that he would not have given credence to the

maliciously contrived tales that Friar Brackley, W. Barker and others imagined untruly, saving your reverence, of me. And now ye may openly understand the soothe, and your son Sir John also; and yet for all that I put never my Master Fastolf's livelihood in trouble, for all the unkindness and covetousness that was shewed me, as I have declared to the bearer hereof, that I know ye trust well, to whom in this ye may give credence at this time.

God amend J. Russ, I would he had been at Ireland for one day's sake.

Your

WILLIAM WORCESTER.

And I thank you heartily for my poor woman (*wife*), she should come to you at your commandment late or rathe (*early*), but for jealousy or misdeeming of people that have me in great await (*that mean to do me mischief*); and ye know well, Mistress, better is a friend unknown than known; the world is so misdeeming and ready to make division and debate that cometh of an envious disposition. And I am right glad that Caister is and shall be at your commandment, and yours in especial, a rich jewel it is at need for all the country in time of war; and my Master Fastolf would rather he had never builded it, than it should be in the governance of any sovereign that will oppress the country (*as, a Duke*). And I find the religious of Saint Benet's full unkind took away a chamber the elder Abbot had put me in possession for my solace, when I might come thither and desport me, and took (*gave*) that chamber to Master John Smyth, that Sir Thomas Howys said to me, was none wholesome counceller in the reformation of the last testament [which] made but two Executors [Paston and Howes], to have the rule alone I would he had never meddled of it, that counsel made much trouble; I pray you keep this Letter close to yourself, as I trust you and Sir James [Gloys] and also in R. Toly, that I understand him close and just.

I had no time to speak within now, late when I was but one day at Norwich, W. Barker slandered me in

certain matters of good (*property*) to the sum of 500 marks that Reynold Harneys should keep and take one half; would Jesu Barker had said true, it might have done me much good; and mistress as I dare desire you, I pray you recommend me to my best Mistress, your Mother Agnes, for she favoured me and did me great charity, to be the better disposed to her Son Master John, and by my soul it made me the heartier to save the livelihood from trouble or from claims, as I report me to all the world, I put never manor nor livelihood of my Master Fastolf's in trouble, nor entitled no creature to no place, and ye may speak to her hereof when ye be alone.

A new endowment for a College of priests was rare at the close of the 15th century; Fastolfe bequeathed it to Caister. The Abbot of St. Benet at Holme, Bishop Waynflete (for Oxford) and Worcester (for Cambridge) are trying to divert it. The Bishop won.

155. The Brothers in Flanders for the Royal Wedding of Margaret of York to Charles, Duke of Burgundy (July, 1468)

To my right reverend and worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston, dwelling at Caister, be this delivered in haste.

[The princess ordered Sir John to attend her. The Court of Charles the Bold was the most splendid in Europe.]

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Mother, I recommend me unto you as humbly as I can think, desiring most heartily to hear of your welfare and heart's ease, which I pray God send you as hastily as any heart can think.

Please it you to weet, that at the making of this bill, my Brother, and I, and all our Fellowship, were in good hele, blessed be God.

As for the Guiding here in this country, it is as worshipful as all the world can devise, and there were never Englishmen had so good chear out of England, that ever I heard of.

As for Tidings here, but if it be of the Feast, I can none send you; saving, that my Lady Margaret was married on Sunday last past at a Town that is called

The Damme, three miles out of Bruges, at five of the clock in the morning; and she was brought the same day to Bruges to her dinner; and there she was received as worshipfully as all the world could desire; as with procession with Ladies, and Lords, best beseen of any people, that ever I saw or heard of. Many Pageants were played in her way in Bruges to her welcoming, the best that ever I saw; and the same day my Lord, the Bastard,[1] took upon him to answer 24 Knights and Gentlemen within 8 days at Justs of Peace; and when that they were answered, they 24 and himself should turney with other 25 the next day after, which is on Monday next coming; and they that have justed with him into this day, have been as richly beseen, and him self also, as cloth of Gold, and Silk, and Silver, and Goldsmiths work might make them; for of such Gear, and Gold, and Pearl, and Stones, they of the Duke's Court, neither Gentlemen nor Gentlewomen, they want none; for without that they have it by wishes, by my truth, I heard never of so great plenty as here is.

This day my Lord Scales[2] justed with a Lord of this country, but not with the Bastard; for they made promise at London, that none of them both should never deal with other in arms; but the Bastard was one of the Lords, that brought the Lord Scales into the field; and of misfortune an horse struck my Lord Bastard on the leg, and hath hurt him so sore, that I can think he shall be of no power to accomplish up his arms; and that is great pity, for by my truth I trow God made never a more worshipful Knight.

And as for the Duke's Court, as of Lords, Ladies and Gentlewomen, Knights, Esquires, and Gentlemen, I heard never of none like to it, save King Arthur's Court. And by my truth, I have no wit nor remembrance to write to you, half the worship that is here; but what lacketh, as it cometh to mind, I shall tell you, when I come home, which I trust to God shall not be long tofore. We depart out of Bruges homeward on Tuesday

[1] See App. I. Burgundy.
[2] See App. I. Woodville.

next coming, and all folk that came with my Lady of Burgoyn out of England, except such as shall abide here still with her, which I wot well shall be but few.

We depart the sooner, for the Duke hath word that the French King is purposed to make war upon him hastily, and that he is within four or five days journey of Bruges, and the Duke rideth, on Tuesday next coming, forward to meet with him; God give him good speed, and all his; for by my truth they are the goodliest fellowship that ever I came amongst, and best can behave them, and most like Gentlemen.

Other Tidings have we none here, but that the Duke of Somerset, and all his Bands departed well beseen out of Bruges a day before that my Lady the Duchess came thither, and they say here, that he is to Queen Margaret that was, and shall no more come here again, nor be holpen by the Duke.

No more, but I beseech you of your blessing as lowly as I can, which I beseech you forget not to give me every day once; and Mother, I beseech you that ye will be good Mistress to my little man, and to see that he go to school.

I sent my Cousin Dawbeney 5*s.* by Calle's man, for to buy for him such gear as he needeth; and Mother I pray you this bill may recommend me to my Sisters both, and to the Master, my Cousin Dawbeney, Sir James, Sir John Stylle, and to pray him to be good Master to little Jack, and to learn him well; and I pray you that this bill may recommend me to all your Folks, and to my Well Willers; and I pray God send you your heart's desire.

Written at Bruges the Friday next after Saint Thomas.[1]

Your Son and Humble Servant,
J. PASTON, the Younger.

[1] Either the 3rd or 7th day of July, the one being the Translation of St. Thomas the Apostle, the other of St. Thomas à Becket. I believe it means the latter. (F.)

156. Sir John courting (July, 1468)

To Mistress Anne [*Haulte, a court lady*].

Since it is so, that I may not, as oft as I would, be there as I might do my message myself, mine own fair Mistress Anne, I pray you to accept this bill for my messenger to recommend me to you in my most faithful wise, as he that fainest of all other desireth to know of your welfare, which I pray God increase to your most pleasure.

And Mistress, though so be, that I as yet, have given you but easy (*little*) cause to remember me for lack of acquaintance, yet I beseech you let me not be forgotten, when ye reckon up all your Servants, to be set in the number with others.

And I pray you, Mistress Anne, for that service that I owe you, that in as short time, as ye goodly may, that I might be ascertained of your intent, and of your best Friends, in such matters as I have broken to you of; which both your and mine right trusty Friends John Lee, or else my Mistress his Wife, promised before you and me at our first and last being together, that as soon as they, or either of them knew your intent, and your Friends, that they should send me word, and if they so do, I trust soon after to see you.

And now farewell, mine own fair Lady, and God give you good rest, for in faith I trow ye be in bed.

Written in my way homeward, on Mary Magdalen's day at Midnight (22 *July*).

Your own,

John Paston.

Mistress Anne, I am proud that ye can read English, wherefore I pray you acquaint yourself with this my lewd (*uncouth*) hand, for my purpose is, that ye shall be more acquainted with it, or else it shall be against my will; but yet and when ye have read this bill, I pray you burn it, or keep it secret to yourself, as my faithful trust is in you.

157. Sir John engages a Garrison to hold Caister (Nov., 1468)

To my right well-beloved Brother, John Paston, Esquire, being at Caister, or to John Dawbeney there, be this Letter delivered.

Right well-beloved Brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet that I have waged for to help you and Dawbeney to keep the place at Caister, four well assured and true men to do all manner of thing what that they be desired to do, in safe-guard, or inforcing of the said place; and moreover they be proved men, and cunning in the war, and in feats of arms, and they can well shoot both Guns and Crossbows, and amend and string them, and devise bulwarks, or any things that should be a strength to the place, and they will, as need is, keep watch and ward, they be sad and well advised men, saving one of them, which is bald and called William Peny, which is as good a man as goeth on the earth, saving a little, he will, as I understand, be a little cupschotten (*tipsy*) but yet he is no brawler, but full of courtesy, much upon James Halman; the other three be named Peryn Sale, John Chapman, Robert Jack's Son (*Jackson*), saving that as yet they have none harness come, but when it cometh it shall be sent to you, and in the mean while I pray you and Dawbeney to purvey them some.

Also, a couple of beds they must needs have, which I pray you by the help of my Mother to purvey for them, till that I come home to you; ye shall find them gentlemanly, comfortable fellows, and that they will and dare abide by their taking, and if ye understand that any assault should be towards, I send you these men, because that men of the country there about you should be frayed (*frightened*) for fear of loss of their goods; wherefore if there were any such thing towards, I would ye took of men of the country but few, and that they were well assured men, for else they might discourage all the remanent.

And as for any writing from the King, he hath promised that there shall come none, and if there do his unwares (*he not knowing*), your answer may be this, how the King hath said, and so to delay them till I may have word, and I shall soon purvey a remedy.

I understand that ye have been with my Lord of Norfolk now of late, what ye have done I wot not; we say that he shall be here again this day. Moreover, I trow John Alford shall not long abide with my Lord; I shall send you tidings of other things in haste, with the grace of God, who, &c. Written on Wednesday next before Saint Martin (11 *Nov.*).

JOHN PASTON.

I fear that Dawbeney is not alther best stored to continue household long; let him send me word in haste, and I will relieve him to my power, and ere long too I hope to be with you.

Roger Ree is Sheriff of Norfolk, and he shall be good enough. The Escheator I am not yet ascertained of.

Also, that these men be at the beginning entreated as courteously as ye can.

Also, I pray you to send me my Flower by the next messenger that cometh.[1]

Also, as for my Lord Fitzwalter's obligation I know none such in mine award as yet.

Also, the obligation of the Bishop of Norwich's obligation, I never saw it that I remember, wherefore I would, and pray my Mother to look it up.

Also, as for the Bible that the Master hath, I weened the utmost price had not past five Marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and so I trow he will give it, weet (*find out*) I pray you.

Also, as for Sir William Barber and Sir William Falgate,[2] I would, if they can purvey for themselves, full fain be discharged of them.

[1] Probably a device as cognizance or seal, or an ornament.
[2] Probably two of the Caister priests.

158. Sir John makes a Friend of the Queen's Chaplain (1469)

To my well-beloved Brother, John Paston, or to John Dawbeney, in his absence.

Right worshipful and well-beloved Brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet that Sir Thomas Howes[1] had a free Chapel in Caister, whereof the gift belongeth to me, which Chapel as I understand should be in the old time, ere the place at Caister were built, within the moat, wherefore I am but the better pleased; and so it is now that at the special request of the Queen and other especial good Lords of mine, I have given it to the bearer hereof called Master John Yotton, a Chaplain of the Queen's; nevertheless in time past I purposed that the Master of the College should have had it, and so ere long to, I hope he shall, wherefore I think he must take possession, and that is the cause of his coming; wherefore I pray you make him good cheer; he is informed that it should be worth an hundred shillings by year, which I believe not; I think it dear enough [at] forty shillings by year; he must have it as it was had before.

Item, this day I understand that there be come Letters from my Mother and you, and Dawbeney, wherein I shall send you answer when I have seen them.

No more at this time, for within this three days I shall let you have knowledge of other matters.

Written the 17th day of March.

Whither he needeth induction, or institution, or none, I wot not; if it need, brother ye may seal any such thing as well as I. Master Stephen can tell all such things.

John Paston, Knight.

159. Sir John Extravagant (1469)

To Sir John Paston.

I Greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, thanking you for my Seal that ye sent me, but I

[1] Howes died 1468.

am right sorry that ye did so great cost thereupon, for one of forty pence should have served me right well; send me word what it cost you, and I shall send you money therefore; I sent you a Letter by a man of Yarmouth, send me word if ye have it, for I marvel ye sent me none answer thereof by Juddy.

I have none very (*certain*) knowledge of your insurance (*engagement*), but if ye be insured, I pray God send you joy and worship together, and so I trust ye shall have, if it be as it is reported of her[1]; and anenst (*before*) God, ye are as greatly bound to her, as ye were married, and therefore I charge you upon my blessing, that ye be as true to her as she were married unto you in all degrees, and ye shall have the more grace and the better speed in all other things.

Also, I would that ye should not be too hasty to be married till ye were sure of your livelihood, for ye must remember what charge ye shall have, and if ye have not [wherewithal] to maintain it, it will be a great rebuke; and therefore labour that ye may have releases of the lands, and be in more surety of your land, or than ye be married.

The [dowager] Duchess of Suffolk is at Ewelm, in Oxfordshire, and it is thought by your friends here, that it is done, that she might be far and out of the way, and the rather feign excuse because of age or sickness, if that the King would send for her for your matters.

Your enemies be as bold here as they were before, wherefore I cannot think but that they have some comfort; I sent to Caister that they should beware in keeping of the place, as ye did write to me; haste you to speed your matters as speedily as ye can, that ye may have less fellowship at Caister, for the expenses and costs be great, and ye have no need thereof and ye remember you well what charges ye have beside, and how your livelihood is dispoiled and wasted by your adversaries.

Also I would ye should purvey for your Sister [Margery] to be with my Lady of Oxford[2] or with my

[1] Anne Hault, kinswoman of the Woodvilles, *see* Table, p. 204.
[2] Widow of the Earl beheaded in 1462. Bedford, Scales, *see* App. I.

Lady of Bedford, or in some other worshipful place, whereas ye think best, and I will help to her finding, for we be either of us weary of other; I shall tell you more when I speak with you; I pray you do your devyr (*endeavour*) herein as ye will my comfort and welfare, and your worship, for divers causes which ye shall understand afterward, &c.

I spake with the Lord Scales at Norwich, and thanked him for the good Lordship that he had shewed to you, and desired his Lordship to be your continual good Lord; and he swore by his troth he would do that he might do for you, and he told me that Yelverton the Justice had spoken to him in your matter, but he told me not what; but I trow, and ye desired him to tell you, he would. Ye are beholden to my Lord of his good report of you in this country, for he reported better of you than I trow ye deserve. I felt by him that there hath been proffered him large proffers on your adversaries part again you.

Send me word as hastily as ye may after the beginning of the term, how ye have sped in all your matters, for I shall think right long till I hear some good tidings.

Item, I pray you recommend me to the good Master that ye gave to the Chapel of Caister, and thank him for the great cost that he did on me at Norwich; and if I were a great Lady he should understand that he should fare the better for me, for me seemeth by his demeaning he should be right a good man.

Item, I send you the nowche (*brooch*) with the diamond, by the bearer hereof. I pray you forget not to send me a kerchief of Cremelle, for neckerchiefs for your sister Anne, for I am shent (*blamed*) of the good Lady she is with, because she hath none, and I can none get in all this town.

I should write more to you but for lack of leisure; God have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written in haste, on Easter Monday.

By your Mother

MARGARET PASTON.

160. King Edward IV. coming to Norwich (1469)

To my Mother, and to my Brother John Paston.

Brother, it is so that the King shall come into Norfolk in haste, and I wot not whether that I may come with him or not; if I come, I must do make a Livery of 20 Gowns, which I must pick out by your advice; and as for the Cloth for such persons as be in that Country, if it might be had there at Norwich, or not, I wot not; and what Persons I am not remembered.

If my mother be at Caister, as there shall be no doubt for the keeping of the place while the King is in that Country, that I may have the most part at Caister.

And whether ye will offer yourself to wait upon my Lord of Norfolk or not, I would ye did that best were to do; I would do my Lord pleasure and service, and so I would ye did, if I wist to be sure of his good Lordship in time to come. He shall have 200 in a Livery blue and tawny, and blue on the left side, and both dark colours.

I pray you send me word, and your advice by Judd of what men, and what horse I could be purveyed of, if so be that I must needs come, and of your advice in all things by writing, and I shall send you hastily other tidings. Let Sorrell be well kept.

John Paston, Knight.

161. The King has settled nothing (June, 1469)

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

To begin, God yield (*reward*) you for my hats. The King hath been in this country, and worshipfully received into Norwich, and had right good cheer, and great gifts in this country, wherewith he holdeth him so well content that he will hastily be here again, and the Queen also, with whom by my poor advice ye shall come, if so be that the term be done by that time that she come into this country; and as for your matters

here, so God help me, I have done as much as in me was, in labouring of them, as well to my Lord Rivers as to my Lord Scales, Sir John Wydville, Thomas Wingfield and others about the King; and as for the Lord Rivers, he said to my Uncle William, Fairfax, and me, that he should move the King to speak to the two Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, that they should leave of their titles of such land as were Sir John Fastolf's, and if so be that they would do nought at the King's request, that then the King should command them to do no waste, nor make none assaults nor frays upon your tenants nor places, till such time as the law hath determined with you or against you; this was said by him the same day in the morning that he departed at noon; whether he moved the King with it or not I cannot say, my Uncle William thinks nay; and the same afternoon following I told my Lord Scales that I had spoken with my Lord his Father, in like form as I have rehearsed, and asked him whether that my Lord his Father had spoken to the King or not, and he gave me this answer, that whether he had spoken to the King or not, that the matter should do well enough.

Thomas Wingfield told me, and swore unto me, that when Brandon moved the King, and besought him to show my Lord favour in his matters against you, that the King said unto him again, "Brandon, though thou canst beguile the Duke of Norfolk, and bring him about [thy] thumb as thou list, I let thee weet thou shalt not do me so; for I understand thy false dealing well enough." And he said unto him, moreover that if my Lord of Norfolk left not of his hold of that matter, that Brandon should repent it, every vein in his heart, for he told him that he knew well enough that he might rule my Lord of Norfolk as he would, and if my Lord did any thing that were contrary to his laws, the King told him he knew well enough that it was by nobody's means but by his, and thus he departed from the King.

Item, as by words, the Lord Scales and Sir John Wydville took tender your matters more than the Lord Rivers.

Item, Sir John Wydville told me, when he was on horseback at the King's departing, that the King had commanded Brandon of purpose to ride forth from Norwich to Lynn, for to take a conclusion in your matter for you; and he bad me that I should cast no doubts but that ye should have your intent, and so did the Lord Scales also; and when that I prayed them at any time to shew their favour to your matter, they answered that it was their matter as well as yours, considering the alliance betwixt you.

Commune with Jakys Hawte, and he shall tell you what language was spoken between the Duke of Suffolk's counsel, and him, and me; it is too long to write, but I promise you ye are beholden to Jakys, for he spared not to speak.

Item, the King rode through Hellesdon Warren towards Walsingham, and Thomas Wingfield promised me that he would find the means that my Lord of Gloucester [Richard] and himself both should shew the King the Lodge that was broken down, and also that they would tell him of the breaking down of the place. Contrary to these matters, and all the comfort that I had of my Lord Scales, Sir John Wydville, and Thomas Wingfield, my Uncle William saith, that the King told him [with] his own mouth, when he had ridden forth by the Lodge in Hellesdon Warren, that he supposed as well that it might fall down by the self, as be plucked down, for if it had been plucked down, he said that we might have put in our bills of it, when his Judges sat on the Oyer and Determiner in Norwich, he being there; and then my Uncle saith how that he answered the King, that ye trusted to his good grace that he should set you through with both the Dukes, by mean of treaty, and he saith that the king answered him that he would neither treat nor speak for you, but for to let the law proceed, and so he saith that they departed; and by my troth and my Lord Treasurer encourage you not more than he did us here, ye shall have but easy (*slight*) help as on that party, wherefore labour your matters effectually, for by my troth it is needed for, for

all their words of pleasure, I cannot understand what their labour in this country hath done good; wherefore be not over swift till ye be sure of your land, but labour sore the law, for by my troth till that be passed with you, ye get but easy help as I can understand.

I had with me one day at dinner in my Mother's place, she being out, the Lord Scales, Sir John Wydville, Sir John Howard, Nicholas Howard, John of Parr, Thomas Garnet, Festus Cheyney, Trussel, the Knight's Son, Thomas Boleyn, qua propter, (*in short*) Brampton, Bernard, and Brown, Perse Howse, W. Tonstal, Lewis de Bretayl, and others, and made them good cheer, so as they held them content.

Item, my Lord of Norfolk gave Bernard, Broom, nor me no gowns at this season,[1] wherefore I waited not on him, notwithstanding I offered my service for that season to my Lady, but it was refused, I wot by advice; wherefore I purpose no more to do so. As for Bernard, Barney, Broom, and W. Calthorpe [they] are sworn my Lord of Gloucester's men, but I stand yet at large, notwithstanding my Lord Scales spoke to me to be with the King, but I made no promise so to be, for I told him that I was not worth a groat without you, and therefore I would make no promise to nobody till they had your good will first, and so we departed.

It was told me that there was out a Privy Seal for you to attend upon the King northward; and if it be so, I think verily it is done to have you from London by craft, that ye should not labour your matters to a conclusion this term, but put them [in] delay. I pray you purvey you on it, to be at home as soon as the term is done, for by God I take great hurt for mine absence in divers places, and the most part of your men at Caister will depart without abode (*delay*), and ye be not at home within this fortnight. I pray you bring home points and laces of silk for you and me.

JOHN PASTON.

[1] Not counting them among his retainers. Retainers were in request. John became the Earl of Oxford's man and remained to the end of his life closely attached to him.

162. CAISTER BESIEGED BY THE DUKE OF NORFOLK (1469) [EDWARD IV. HAVING BEEN IMPRISONED BY WARWICK.]

To Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that Sir John Heveningham was at Norwich this day, and spake with me at my Mother's, but he would not that it should be understood, for my Lord (*the Duke*) hath made him one of the Captains at Caister, of the people that should keep the watch about the place, that no man should succour them if my Lord departed. I desired him to favour them, if any man should come to them from me or you, and he would not grant it, but he desired me to write to you to understand, if that my Lord might be moved to find surety to recompence you all wrongs, and [whether] ye would suffer him to enter peaceably, and the law after his entry would deem (*adjudge*) it you; be ye advised what answer ye would give.

Item, since that I spake with him, and the same day, a faithful friend of ours came unto me and moved me, if that my Lord might be intreated to suffer indifferent men to keep the place, and take the profits for both parties till the right be determined by the law; and my Lord for his part, and ye for your part, to find sufficient surety that you neither should vex, let, nor trouble the said indifferent men to keep peaceably the possession of the said place, and to take the profits unto the time it be determined by the law to his behalf, that the law deemeth it; and the said persons, that so indifferently keep possession, before their entry into the said place, to find also sufficient surety to answer the party that the law deemeth it to, of the profits during their possession, and to suffer him peaceably to enter, or any in his name, whensoever they be required by the party to whom the right is deemed of all these premises; send me word how ye will be demeaned by as good advice as ye can get, and make no longer delay, for they must

needs have hasty succour that be in the place, for they be sore hurt, and have none help, and if they have hasty help it shall be the greatest worship that ever ye had, and if they be not holpen it shall be to you a great disworship; and look never to have favour of your neighbours and friends, but if this speed well; therefore pretend it (*put it first?*) in your mind, and purvey therefore in haste; howsoever ye do, God keep you, and send you the victory of your enemies, and give you and us all grace to live in peace. Written on Saint Giles' even, at nine of the bell at night (31 *Aug.*).

Robin came home yester even, and he brought me neither writing from you, nor good answer of this matter, which grieveth me right ill that I have sent you so many messengers, and have so feeble answers again.

By your Mother
MARGARET PASTON.

163. SIEGE OF CAISTER: TALK OF A COMPROMISE SIR JOHN UNDECIDED (1469)

To Master Writtill.

MASTER Writtill,[1] I recommend me to you, beseeching you heartily, as mine whole trust is in you, that ye do your devoir to continue truce till Friday or Saturday in the morning, by which time I hope the messenger shall come, and that ye be not driven to take an appointment (*terms for surrender*) if ye can understand by any likelihood that it be able to be avoided and resisted, and that ye feel my Brother's disposition therein, as my trust is in you, praying you to remember that it resteth, as God help me, on all my weal; for, as God help me, I had lever the place were burned, my Brother and Servants [being] saved, than the best appointment that ever ye and I communed of, should by my good will be taken, if this message from the King may rescue it; and

[1] Writtle or Wrettel was a servant of the Duke of Clarence, and appears to have been sent down to endeavour at an accommodation between the besiegers and the besieged during the truce which was then taken. (F.) See also No. 173 for this siege.

if it be so, that my Lord be removed by the King's commandment, which resteth with his honour, I may in time to come do him service, as shall recompence any grudge or displeasure that he ever had, or hath to me or mine; and ye, if it the rather by your wisdom and policy the mean above written may be had, shall be as sure of the service of my true brother and servants, and me, as ye can devise by my troth; for in good faith this matter sticketh more nigh mine heart and me than I can write unto you, and to my brother and servants more near than, as God knoweth, they wot of; wherefore master Writtill, all our welfare resteth in you, beseeching you to remember it, for this matter is to all us either making or marring.

Item, as for Arblaster or Lovell, I cannot think that they or any of them may be with you, wherefore in you is all; and God have you in keeping.

Written at London, the next day after your departing; I shall send you more knowledge to-morrow, with God's grace.

Yours
JOHN PASTON, Knight.

164. SIEGE OF CAISTER: SIR JOHN URGED TO BE ACTIVE (1469)

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

I GREET you well, letting you weet that your Brother and his fellowship stand in great jeopardy at Caister, and lack victuals, and Daubeney and Berney be dead,[1] and divers other greatly hurt; and they fail Gunpowder and Arrows, and the place [is] sore broken with guns of the other party, so that but they have hasty help, they be like to lose both their lives and the place, to the greatest rebuke to you that ever came to any gentleman, for every man in this country marvelleth greatly that ye suffer them to be so long in so great jeopardy without help or other remedy.

[1] Daubeney was killed, but not Osbert Berney.

The Duke hath been more fervently set thereupon, and more cruel, since that Writtil, my Lord of Clarence's man was there, than he was before, and he hath sent for all his tenants from every place, and others, to be there at Caister on Thursday next coming, that there is then like to be the greatest multitude of people that came there yet; and they purpose then to make a great assault, for they have sent for guns to Lynn and other places by the sea's side, that, with their great multitude of guns with other shot and ordnance, there shall no man dare appear in the place, they shall hold them so busy with their great [number of] people, that it shall not lie in their power within to hold it against them, without God help them, or have hasty succour from you; therefore, as ye will have my blessing, I charge you and require you, that ye see your brother be holpen in haste, and if ye can have none mean, rather desire writing from my Lord of Clarence, if he be at London, or else of my Lord Archbishop of York, to the Duke of Norfolk, that he will grant them that be in the place their lives and their goods; and in eschewing of insurrections and other inconveniences that be like to grow within the Shire of Norfolk, this troublous world, because of such conventicles and gatherings within the said Shire, for cause of the said place, they shall suffer him to enter upon such appointment or other like, taken by the advice of your counsel there at London, if ye think this be not good, till the law hath determined otherwise: and let him write another Letter to your brother to deliver the place up on the same appointment: and if ye think, as I can suppose, that the Duke of Norfolk will not agree to this, because he granted this afore, and they in the place would not accept it, then I would the said messenger should with the said Letters bring from the said Lord of Clarence, or else my Lord Archbishop, to my Lord of Oxford other Letters to rescue them forthwith, though the said Earl of Oxford should have the place during his life for his labour; spare not this to be done in haste if ye will have their lives, and be set by in Norfolk, though ye should lose the best manor of all

for the rescue. I had lever ye lost the livelihood than their lives; ye must get a messenger of the Lords, or some other notable man, to bring these Letters; do your devoir now, and let me send you no more messengers for this matter, but send me by the bearer hereof more certain comfort than ye have done by all other that I sent before; in any wise let the Letters that shall come to the Earl of Oxford, come with the Letters that shall come to the Duke of Norfolk, that if he will not agree to the one, that ye may have ready your rescue, that it need no more to send, therefore God keep you. Written the Tuesday next before Holy Rood day (14 *Sept.*), in haste.

By your Mother
MARGARET PASTON.

165. SIEGE OF CAISTER: A RESCUE TOO COSTLY

(Raising the siege by force.)

To Margaret Paston.

MOTHER, upon Saturday last was, Dawbeney and Berney were alive and merry, and I suppose there came no man out of the place to you since that time, that could have ascertained to you of their deaths; and as touching the fierceness of the Duke or of his people, shewed since that time that Writtill departed, I trow it was concluded that truce and abstinence of war should be had ere he departed, which shall endure till Monday next coming; and by that time I trow that truce shall be taken till that day sev'night after, by which time, I hope of, a good direction shall be had; and whereas ye write to me that I should sue for letters from my Lords of Clarence and York, they be not here, and if they wrote to him as they have done two times, I trow it would not avail; and as for to labour those letters and the rescue together, they be two sundry things, for when the rescue is ready, and the cost thereof is done, for if I be driven thereto to rescue it ere they come there that should do it (*those whom he expected to do it*), it shall cost a thousand scutes, and as much after, which way were hard for

me to take while that I may do it otherwise; but as to say, that they shall be rescued if all the lands that I have in England, and Friends may do it, they shall, and God be friendly, and that as shortly as it may goodly and well be brought about; and the greatest default earthly is money, and some friends and neighbours to help, wherefore I beseech you to send me comfort with what money ye could find the means to get or chevise upon surety sufficient, or upon livelihood to be in mortgage or yet sold, and what people by likelihood your friends and mine could make upon a short warning, and to send me word in all the haste as it is needful.

But, Mother, I feel that by your writing that ye deem in me I should not do my devoir without ye wrote to me some heavy tidings, and, Mother, if I had need to be quickened with a letter in this need, I were of myself too slow a fellow; but, Mother, I ensure you that I have heard ten times worse tidings since the siege began, than any letter that ye wrote to me, and sometimes I have heard right good tidings both; but this I assure you that they that be within have no worse rest than I have, nor casteth more jeopardy; but whether I had good tidings or ill, I take God to witness, that I have done my devoir, as I would be done for in case like, and shall do till there be an end of it.

I have sent to the King to York, and to the Lords, and hope to have answer from them by Wednesday at the furthest, and after that answer shall I be ruled, and then send you word, for till that time can I take none direction; and to encomfort you, despair you not for lack of victuals nor of gunpowder, nor be not too heavy nor too merry therefore; for and heaviness or sorrow would have been the remedy thereof, I knew never matter in my life that I could have been so heavy or sorry for, and with God's grace it shall be remedied well enough, for by my troth I had lever lose the Manor of Caister than the simplest man's life therein, if that may be his salvation; wherefore I beseech you to send me word what money and men ye think that I am like to get in that country; for the hasty purchase (*procuring*)

of money and men shall be the getting and rescue of it, and the salvation of most men's lives, if we take that way.

Also, this day I purpose to send to York to the King for a thing, which same only may by likelihood be the salvation of all; ye must remember that the rescue of it is the last remedy of all, and how it is not easy to get; and also ye send me word that I should not come home without that I come strong, but if I had had one other strong place in Norfolk, to have come to, though I had brought right few with me, I should with God's grace have rescued it by this time, or else he should have been fain to have besieged both places ere yet, and the Duke had not kept (*held*) Yarmouth out: but, Mother, I beseech you send me some money, for by my troth I have but ten shillings, and wot not where to have more; and moreover I have been ten times in like case, or worse, within this ten weeks.

I sent to Richard Calle for money, but he sendeth me none; I beseech you to guide the evidence that Peacock can tell you of, and to see it safe, for it is told me that Richard Calle hath had right large language of them; I would not they come in his fingers: I have no word from you of them, nor whether ye have yet in your keeping the evidence of East Beckham out of his hands, nor whether ye have sent to my Manors that they should not pay him no more money or not; also that it like you to give credence to Robin in other things.

Written the Friday next after Holy Rood day (14 *Sept.*).

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

166. SIEGE OF CAISTER: SIR JOHN DESIRES HIS BROTHER TO SURRENDER IF IT CANNOT BE HELPED (18 Sept., 1469)

To John Paston, and to none other.

I RECOMMEND me to you, and promise you that I have and shall labour and find the mean that ye shall have

honour of your dealing, as ye have hither towards, as all England and every man reporteth; and moreover I am in way for it by many divers ways, whereof there shall be one executed by this day fortnight at the furthest, and peradventure within seven days; and if ye may keep it so long I would be glad, and after that if ye have not from me other writing, that then ye do therein for your safe-guard and your fellowship only, and to your worships; and as for the place, no force therefore (*it does not matter*); ye know this hand, therefore needeth no mention from whom it cometh; and moreover they that be about you be in obloquy of all men; and moreover they have been written to by as special writing as might be, after the world that now is (*by the authority at the moment strongest*), and promise you that the Duke's counsel would that they had never begun it; and moreover they be charged in pain of their lives, that though they get the place, they should not hurt one of you; there is neither ye nor none with you, but, and he knew what is generally reported of him, he or ye, and God fortune you well, may think him four times better in reputation of all folk than ever he was.

Beware whom ye make a counsel to this matter.

Also, I let you weet that I am in much more comfort of you than I may write, and they that be about you (*the besiegers*) have cause to be more afeared than ye have; and also beware of spending of your stuff of quarrels, powder, and stone (*bullets*), so that if they assault you ere we come, that ye have stuff to defend you of over, and then of my life ye get no more; and that your fellowship be ever occupied in renewing of your stuff.

Written the Monday next after Holy Rood day.

I trow, though ye be not privy thereto, there is taken a truce new till this day sev'night.

167. Caister capitulates: The Terms (26th Sept., 1469)

The Duke of Norfolk.

Where[as] John Paston, Esquire, and other diverse persons have, against the Peace, kept the Manor of Caister with force, against the Will and intent of Us the Duke of Norfolk, to our great Displeasure; which notwithstanding, at the contemplation of the Writing of the most worshipful and reverend Father in God the Cardinal of England, and our most trusty and entirely beloved Uncle the Archbishop of Canterbury, the right noble Prince my Lord of Clarence, and other Lords of our blood, and also at the great labour and instance of our most dear and singular beloved Wife, We be agreed that the said John Paston and his said Fellowship, being in the said Manor, shall depart and go out of the said Manor without delay, and make thereof deliverance to such Persons as we will assign, the said Fellowship having their Lives and Goods, Horse and Harness, and other Goods being in the keeping of the said John Paston; except Guns, Cross bows, and Quarrels and all other Hostelments (*warlike Implements*) to the said Manor annexed and belonging; and to have 15 Days respite after their said departing out, to go into what place shall like them, without any Actions or Quarrel to be taken or made by us, or in our name to them, or any of them, within our Franchise or without, during the said time.

Given under our Signet at Yarmouth the 26th day of September, the 9th year of King Edward the IV[th].

Norfolk.

In spite of these promises the Duke afterwards tried to charge John Paston with murder, for the death of two of the besiegers, although the besiegers had slain Daubeny.

168. JOHN THE YOUNGEST REPORTS Caister yielded. J. P.

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, and as for the certainty of the deliverance of Caister, John Chapman can tell you how that we were enforced thereto, as well as myself; as for John Chapman and his three fellows, I have purveyed that they be paid each of them forty shillings, with the money that they had of you and Dawbeney; and that is enough for the season that they have done you service; I pray you give them their thank, for by my troth they have as well deserved it as any men that ever bear life, but as for money ye need not to give them without ye will, for they be pleased with their wages.

Writtil promised me to send you the certainty of the appointments (*terms*), we were for lack of victuals [and] gunpowder, men's hearts, lack of surety of rescue, driven thereto to take appointment (*make terms*).

If ye will that I come to you, send me word, and I shall purvey me for to tarry with you a two or three days; by my troth the rewarding of such folks as hath been with me during the siege, hath put me in great danger (*debt*) for the money; God preserve you, and I pray you be of good cheer till I speak with you, and I trust to God to ease your heart in some things.

JOHN PASTON.

169. MARGARET PASTON IS INDIGNANT (1469)

To Sir John Paston, in haste, a matre.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that me think by the Letter that ye sent me by Robin, that ye think that I should write to you fables and imaginations, but I do not so, I have written as it have been informed me, and will do; it was told me that both Dawbeney and Berney were dead, but for certain Dawbeney is dead. God assoil

his Soul, whereof I am right sorry, and it had pleased God that it might have been otherwise.

Remember you, ye have had two great losses within this twelvemonth of him, and of Sir Thomas[1]; God visiteth you as it pleaseth him in sundry wises, he would ye should know him and serve him better than ye have done before this time, and then he will send you the more grace to do well in all other things; and for God's love remember it right well, and take it patiently, and thank God of his visitation; and if any thing have been amiss, any otherwise than it ought to have been before this, either in pride, or in lavish expences, or in any other thing, that have offended God, amend it, and pray him of his grace and help, and intend well to God, and to your neighbours, and though your power hereafter be to acquit (*pay back*) them of their malice, yet be merciful to them, and God shall send you the more grace to have your intent in other things. I remember these clauses, because of the last Letter that ye sent me. I have sent to Harry Halman, of Sporle, to help to get as ye desired me, and he cannot get past five or eight [men] at the most, and yet it will not be, but if he come, that ye trust upon that should come, for they belong a part to him; and Richard Sharman hath assayed on his part, and he cannot get past five, for those that belong to us, they belong also to our adversaries,[2] and they have been desired by them, and they would nought do for them, and therefore they think to have maugree (*ill-will*) of the other part.

As for the gentleman that ye desired me to speak with, I spake with his wife, and she told me he was not in this country, nor nought wist when he should be here; and as for the other man he has bought him a Livery in Bromholm Priory,[3] and have given up the world, &c.

[1] Probably Thos. Lyndes, a priest much trusted by Sir John.

[2] *I.e.* the men were formally retained by both the Pastons and the other party.

[3] It was usual for persons growing into years, to procure by purchase or gift a retreat in some religious society, where they were treated as permanent boarders for the rest of their lives. (F.)

Item, as for money I could get but ten pounds upon pledges, and that is spent for your matters here, for paying of your men that were at Caister, and other things, and I wot not where to get none, neither for surety nor for pledges; and as for mine own livelihood, I am so simply paid thereof, that I fear me I shall be fain to borrow for myself, or else to break up household, or both.

As for the yielding of the place at Caister, I trow Writtil hath told of the appointments how it is delivered, I would that had been so ere this time, and then there should not have been done so mickle hurt as there is in divers ways, for many of our well-willers are put to loss for our sakes, and I fear me it shall be long ere it be recompensed again, and that shall cause others to do the less for us hereafter.

I would ye should [send] your brother word, and some other that ye trust, to see to your own livelihood to set it in a rule, and to gather thereof that may be had in haste; and also of Sir John Fastolf's livelihood, that may be gathered in peaceable wise, for as for Richard Calle he will no more gather it, but if ye command him, and he would fain make his account, and have your good mastership, as it is told me, and deliver the evidence of Beckham, and all other things that longeth to you, that he trusteth that ye will be his good master hereafter; and he saith he will not take none new master till ye refuse his service.

Remember that your livelihood may be set in such a rule, that ye may know how it is, and what is owing to you, for by my faith, I have holpen as much as I may and more, saving myself, and therefore take heed ere it be worse.

This Letter was begun on Friday was sev'night, and ended this day next after Michaelmas day; God keep you, and give you grace to do as well as I would ye did, and I charge you beware that ye set no land to mortgage, for if any advise you thereto, they are not your friends; beware betimes mine advice, &c., and I trow your Brother will give you tidings in haste.

MARGARET PASTON.

170. JOHN ON BEHALF OF THE GARRISON (Oct., 1469)

To my Master Sir John Paston, in Fleet-street.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend unto you, praying you that ye will in all haste send me word how that ye will that Sir John Styll, John Pamping, William Milisent, Nicholas Maudent, [and] T. Thomson shall be ruled, and whether that they shall seek them new services, or not; and Matthew Bedford also, for he hath been with me this season, and is from my mother; and if so be that ye will have these to abide with you, or any of them, send word which that they be, for betwixt this and Hallowmas my mother is agreed that they shall have meat and drink of her for such a certain [sum] weekly as my mother and ye and I can accord when we meet, notwithstanding if ye could get Berney, or any of these said fellows, which that ye will not keep, any service in the mean season, it were more worship for you than to put them from you like masterless hounds, for by my troth they are as good men's bodies as ever live, and specially Sir John Still and John Pamping; and I were of power to keep them and all these before rehearsed, by troth they should never depart from me while I lived.

If ye send me word that I shall come to you to London for to commune with you of any matter, so God help me, I have neither money to come up with, nor for to tarry with you when I am there, but if ye send me some, for by my troth these works have caused me to lay out for you better than ten or twelve pounds, besides that money that I had of my mother, which is about an eight pound; God amend defaults, but this I warrant you, without that it be Matthew, which ye sent word by John Thresher that ye would have to await on you, there is no man that was hired for the time of this siege, that will ask you a penny.

Also, I pray you send down a commandment to Stutevylle, or to some auditor, to take accounts of

Dawbeney's bills, for his Executors are sore called upon for to administer by the Bishop, or else he saith that he will sequester; Dawbeney set in his debts that ye owed him twelve pounds and ten shillings, whether it be so or not, his bills of his own hands will not lie, for he made his bills clear, or then (*before*) the siege came about us. As for the evidence of Beckham, my mother sent to Calle for them, and he sent her word that he would make his accounts and deliver the evidence and all together.

My mother hath sent to him again for them this day; if she speed, they shall be sent to you in all haste, or else, and ye send for me, I shall bring them with me. Send my mother and me word who ye will that [shall] have the rule of your livelihood here in this country, and in what form that it shall be dealt with. I will not make me masterfast with my Lord of Norfolk, nor with none other till I speak with you; and ye think it to be done, get me a master.

Deal courteously with the Queen and that fellowship, and with Mistress Anne Hawte for Wappys[1] till I speak with you. Written on Saint Faith's Even (5 *Oct.*).

JOHN PASTON.

By Saint George I and my fellowship stand in fear of my Lord of Norfolk's men, for we be threatened sore, notwithstanding the safeguards (*safe-conducts*) that my fellowship have; as for me I have none, nor none of your household men, nor none will have; it were shame to take it.

[1] This expression "for Wappys" I do not understand. (F.) Perhaps Wappys may be a proper name. (G.) May it be a contraction for "What hapys" [y^{t}y^{t}appys] (*whatever happens*)? Sir John did not marry Anne Haulte, nor did his brother pay further attention to the Woodvilles. Pamping and Milsent remained in the service of John the younger.

170. Interrupting the Enemy's Court (Jan., 1472)

To my Right worshipful Brother Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered.

(Abridged.)

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you in my best wise. Liketh it you to weet that I have this day delivered your mantle, your ray gown, and your cross-bows with telers and windlass, and your Normandy bill to Kerby to bring with him to London. . . .

Item, I pray you send me some secret tidings of the likelihood of the world by the next messenger that cometh between, that I may be either merrier or else more sorry than I am, and also that I may guide me thereafter.

Item, as for Sir Robert Wingfield, I can get no ten pounds of him, but he saith that I shall have the fairest harness that I can buy in London for silver, but money can I none get.

I cannot yet make my peace with my Lord of Norfolk nor my Lady by no means, yet every man telleth me, that my Lady saith passingly well of me always; notwithstanding I trow that they will sue the appeal this term, yet there is no man of us indicted, but if it were done afore the Coroners ere then we came out of the place; there is now but three men in it, and the Bridges always drawn. No more but God lant you mine herr.[1] Written the Tuesday next after Saint Agnes the first (21 *Jan.*).

John Paston.

Item, yesterday W. Gornay entered into Saxthorp, and there was he keeping a Court, and had the tenants attourned to him; but ere the court was all done, I came thither with a man with me and no more, and there before him and all his fellowship, Gayne, Bomsted, &c. I charged the tenants that they should

[1] God lant you mynherr, meant for a Flemish greeting, *i.e.* God guide you, Sir.

proceed no further in their court upon pain that might fall of it; and they letted for a season, but they saw that I was not able to make my party good, and so they proceeded further: I saw that and sat me down by the steward and blotted his book with my finger as he wrote,[1] so that all the tenants affirmed that the Court was interrupted by me as in your right, and I requested them to record that there was no peaceable court kept, and so they said they would.

[1] The manor court was formerly interrupted in order to show legally that the claim to possession was contested by the Pastons.

PART X

(A) MARGERY PASTON MARRIES BENEATH HER

(B) SOME ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH

Richard Calle was the head bailiff and accountant, etc., of John Paston. He married Margery, apparently, at or before Christmas, 1469. Later, he appears to have had a manor of his own at Edingthorpe (F.), and to have become finally a person of county standing. Sir John's threat of taking the family business from him (pp. 258, 263), was not carried out. He had been bailiff since 1450 and must have been very much older than Margery.

PART X

172. A Proposal of Marriage (between 1467 and 1469)

To my right worshipful and good Master, Sir John Paston, Knight.

Right worshipful Sir, after due recommendation, please it you to understand the cause of my writing is for a marriage for my Mistress Margery your Sister; for my Nephew John Straunge would make her sure of forty pounds jointure, and two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year of inheritance; and if ye and your friends will agree thereto, I trust to God it shall take a conclusion to the pleasure of God and worship to both parties.

Moreover, and it pleaseth you to weet, I am sore troubled with Bedston, as well by the way of attachment out of the Chancery as otherwise; I must beseech you of your good mastership and help in secret manner, as Sir Thomas Lynes the bringer of this shall inform you. I shall be at London in the beginning of this term by the grace of God, which preserve you. Written at Norwich, in haste, the Monday after Twelfth-day.

By your
J. Strange.

The Stranges or L'Estranges here mentioned were of the ancient and knightly family of L'Estrange, of Hunstanton in Norfolk. (F.) This proposal came to nothing.

173. The Brothers wrath with their Sister. Siege of Caister (1469)

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

Sir, pleaseth it to understand, that I conceive, by your Letter which that ye sent me by Jude, that ye have

heard of Richard Calle's labour which he maketh by our ungracious sister's assent, but whereas they write that they have my good will therein, saving your reverence, they falsly lie of it, for they never spake to me of that matter, nor none other body in their name. Lovell asked me once a question, whether that I understood how it was betwixt R^d^ Calle and my sister; I can think that it was by Calle's means, for when I asked him whether Calle desired him to move me that question or not, he would have gotten it away by hums and by hays, but I would not so be answered; wherefore at the last he told me that his eldest son desired him to spere (*inquire*) whether that Richard Calle were sure of her or not, for he said that he knew a good marriage for her, but I wot he lied, for he is whole with Richard Calle in that matter; wherefore to that intent that he nor they should pick no comfort of me, I answered him, that and my Father, whom God assoil! were alive, and had consented thereto, and my Mother and ye both, he should never have my good will for to make my Sister to sell candle and mustard in Framlingham, and thus, with more which were too long to write to you, we departed.

And whereas it pleaseth you in your Letter to cry me mercy, for that ye sent me not such gear as I sent you money for; I cry you mercy that I was so lewd (*troublesome*) to encumber you with any so simple a matter, considering the great matters and weighty that ye have to do; but need compelled me, for in this country is no such stuff as I sent to you for.

Also, whereas it pleaseth you to send to Richard Calle to deliver me money, so God help me, I will none ask him for myself, nor none had I of him, nor of none other man but of mine own since ye departed, but that little that I might forbear of mine own, I have delivered to Dawbeney for household, and paid it for you in men's wages, and therefore whoever sendeth you word that I have spent you any money since ye went hence, they must give you another reckoning, saving in meat and drink, for I eat like an horse, of purpose to eat you out

at the doors, but that needeth not, for you come not within them, wherefore, so God help me, the fellowship here (*Caister*) thinks that ye have forgotten us all, and any thing be ill ruled when ye come home wite (*blame*) it [on] yourself for default of oversight.

Also, I understand for very certain, and it is sent me so word out of my Lord's house, that this Pentecost is my Lord's Counsel at Framlingham, and they purpose this week and the next to hold courts here at Caister, and at all other manors that were Sir John Fastolf's, purchased of Yelverton and of Sir Thomas Howes, whom God assoil, and how that my demeaning shall be, it is too late to send to you for advice, wherefore, and I do well I ask no thank, and if I do ill, I pray you lay the default on over little wit, but I purpose to use the first point of hawking, to hold fast and I may; but so God help me, and they might pull down the house on our heads, I wite them not, which I trust to God to keep them from; for by God that bought me, the best Earl in England would not deal so with my Lord and my Lady as ye do, without making of some means to them (*some advances through friends, etc.*), so God help me, whosoever advise you to do so, he is not your friend; and I may, I trust to God to see you about Midsummer or before, for in good faith I ween ye purpose you that it shall be Easter ere ye come home, for all your servants here ween that ye purpose no more to deal with them, but to leave them here in hostage to my Lord of Norfolk.

Also, Sir, I pray you purvey what Inn that my brother Edmund shall be in, for he loseth sore his time here I promise you; I pray you send me word by the next messenger that cometh, and I shall either send him or bring him up with me to London.

Also, Sir, we poor sans deniers (*moneyless men*) of Caister have broken three or four steel bows (*i.e. cross-bows*), wherefore we beseech you and there be any maker of steel-bows in London which is very cunning, that ye will send me word, and I shall send you the bows that be broken, which be your own great bow, and Robert

Jackson's bow, and John Pamping's bow; these three have cast so many calves, that they shall never cast quarrels (*square-headed bolts*) till they be new made.

I pray you find the means that my Lord may have some reasonable mean proffered, so that he and my Lady may understand that ye desire to have his good Lordship; I promise you it shall do you ease and your tenants both, and God preserve [you].

JOHN PASTON.

174. LOVE LETTER FROM RICHARD CALLE TO MARGERY PASTON

To Mistress Margery Paston.

MINE own Lady and Mistress, and, before God, very true wife,[1] I with heart full sorrowful recommend me unto you, as he that cannot be merry, nor nought shall be till it be otherwise with us than it is yet, for this life that we lead now is neither pleasure to God nor to the world, considering the great bond of matrimony that is made betwixt us, and also the great love that hath been, and as I trust, yet is betwixt us, and as on my part never greater; wherefore I beseech Almighty God comfort us as soon as it pleaseth him, for we that ought of very right to be most together, are most asunder, me seemeth it is a thousand year ago since that I spake with you, I had liever than all the good in the world I might be with you; alas, alas! good Lady, full little remember they what they do that keep us thus asunder, four times in the year are they accursed that let (*hinder*) matrimony; it causeth many men to deem in them they have large conscience in other matters as well as herein, but what Lady suffer as ye have done. And make you as merry as ye can, for I wis, lady, at the long way God will of his rightwiseness help his servants that mean truly, and would live according to his laws, &c.

I understand, Lady, ye have had as much sorrow for me as any Gentlewoman hath had in the world, as

[1] Margery had solemnly betrothed herself to Calle, and in the eyes of the Church this was almost as binding as matrimony.

would God all that sorrow that ye have had had rested upon me and that ye had been discharged of it, for I wis, Lady, it is to me a death to hear that ye be entreated otherwise than ye ought to be; this is a painful life that we lead, I cannot live thus without it be a great displeasure to God.

Also like you to weet that I had sent you a Letter by my lad from London, and he told me he might not speak with you, there was made so great await upon him and upon you both; he told me John Thresher come to him in your name, and said that ye sent him to my lad for a Letter or a token, which I should have sent you, but he trust him not, he would not deliver him none; after that he brought him a ring, saying that ye sent it him, commanding him that he should deliver the Letter or token to him, which I conceive since by my lad it was not by your sending, it was by my Mistress and Sir James's [Gloys] advice; Alas, what mean they? I suppose they deem we be not ensured together, and if they so do I marvel, for then they are not well advised, remembering the plainness that I brake to my Mistress at the beginning, and I suppose by you both (*too*), and ye did as ye ought to do of very right, and if ye have done the contrary, as I have been informed ye have done, ye did neither consciencely nor to the pleasure of God, without ye did it for fear, and for the time to please such as were at that time about you; and if ye did it for this cause it was a reasonable cause, considering the great and importable calling upon that ye had, and many an untrue tale was made to you of me, which, God know it, I was never guilty of.

My Lad told me that my Mistress your mother asked him, if he had brought any Letter to you, and many other things she bare him on hand, and among all other at the last she said to him that I would not make her privy to the beginning, but she supposed I would at the ending; and as to that, God know it, she knew it first of me and none other, I wot not what her mistresship meaneth, for by my troth there is no gentlewoman alive that my heart tendereth more than it doth

her, nor is loather to displease, saving only your person, which of very right I ought to tender and love best, for I am bound thereto by the law of God, and so will do while that I live, whatsoever fall of it; I suppose and ye tell them sadly the truth, they will not damn their souls for us; though I tell them the truth they will not believe me as well as they will do you, and therefore, good Lady, at the reverence of God be plain to them and tell the truth, and if they will in no wise agree thereto, betwixt God, the Devil, and them be it, and that peril that we should be in, I beseech God it may lie upon them and not upon us; I am heavy and sorry to remember their disposition, God send them grace to guide all things well, as well [as] I would they did; God be their guide and send them peace and rest, &c.

I marvel much that they should take this matter so heedely (*grievously*) as I understand they do, remembering it is in such case as it cannot be remedied, and [remembering] my desert upon every behalf, it is for to be thought there should be none obstacle against it; and also the worshipful that is in them, is not in your marriage, it is in their own marriage, which I beseech God send them such as may be to their worship and pleasure to God and to their hearts ease, for else were it great pity. Mistress I am afraid to write to you for I understand ye have shewed my letters that I have sent you before this time; but I pray you let no creature see this Letter, as soon as ye have read it let it be burnt, for I would no man should see it in no wise. Ye had no writing from me this two year, nor I will not send you no more, therefore I remit all this matter to your wisdom; Almighty Jesu preserve, keep, and [give] you your heart's desire, which I wot well should be to God's pleasure, &c.

This Letter was written with as great pain as ever wrote I thing in my life, for in good faith I have been right sick, and yet am not verily at ease, God amend it, &c.

RICHARD CALLE.

As this letter remained in the family collection it is probable Margery never received it. Calle had been bailiff since 1450.

175. The Bishop intervenes. Margaret Paston casts out her Daughter (1469)

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

I Greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that on Thursday last was, my mother and I were with my Lord of Norwich, and desired him that he would no more do in the matter touching your sister, till that ye and my brother and others that were Executors to your father might be here together, for they had the rule of her as well as I; and he said plainly that he had been required so often to examine her, that he might not, nor would no longer delay it, and charged me in pain of cursing that she should not be deferred, but that she should appear before him the next day; and I said plainly that I would neither bring her nor send her; and then he said that he would send for her himself; and charged that she should be at her liberty to come when he sent for her; and he said by his troth that he would be as sorry for her, and she did not well (*married not well*), as he would be and she were right near of his kin, both for my mother's sake, and mine, and other of her friends, for he wist well that her demeaning had sticked sore at our hearts.

My mother and I informed him that we could never understand by her saying, by no language that ever she had to him, that neither of them were bound to other, but that they might choose both; then he said that he would say to her as well as he could, before that he examined her; and so it was told me by divers persons that he did as well and as plainly as she had been right near to him, which were too long to write at this time, hereafter ye shall weet, and who were labourers therein; the Chancellor was not so guilty therein as I weened he had been.

On Friday the Bishop sent for her by Ashfield and other that are right sorry of her demeaning, and the Bishop said to her right plainly, and put her in remem-

brance how she was born, what kin and friends that she had, and should have more if she were ruled and guided after them; and if she did not, what rebuke, and shame, and loss should be to her, if she were not guided by them, and cause of forsaking of her for any good, or help, or comfort that she should have of them; and said that he had heard say, that she loved such one that her friends were not pleased with that she should have, and therefore he bad her be right well advised how she did; and said that he would understand the words that she had said to him, whether it made matrimony or not, and she rehearsed what she had said, and said, if those words made it not sure, she said boldly, that she would make it surer ere than she went thence, for she said she thought in her conscience she was bound whatsoever the words were; these lewd words grieveth me and her grandam as much as all the remanent; and then the Bishop and the Chancellor both said that there was neither I nor no friend of hers would receive [her].

And then Calle was examined apart by himself, that her words and his accorded, and the time, and where it should have been done; and then the Bishop said that he supposed that there should be found other things against him that might cause the letting thereof,[1] and therefore he said he would not be too hasty to give sentence thereupon, and said that he would give over day till the Wednesday or Thursday after Michaelmas, and so it is delayed; they would have had her (*their*) will performed in haste, but the Bishop said he would none otherwise than he had said.

I was with my Mother, at her place [in Norwich], when she was examined, and when I heard say what her demeaning was, I charged my servants that she should not be received in mine house; I had given her warning, she might have been ware afore, if she had been gracious; and I sent to one or two more that they should not receive her if she came; she was brought again to my place for to have been received, and Sir

[1] *I.e.* if he had done any such wrongs as gave the Church jurisdiction over him, it might be undone, as a punishment.

James told them that brought her, that I had charged them all, and she should not be received; and so my Lord of Norwich hath set (*lodged*) her at Roger Best's, to be there till the day before said, God knoweth full evil against his will and his wife's, if they durst do otherwise; I am sorry that they are a-cumbered with her, but yet I am better paid (*satisfied*) that she is there for the while, than she had been in other place, because of the sadness and good disposition of himself and his wife; I pray you and require you that ye take it not pensily (*heavily*) for I wot well it goeth right near your heart, and so doth it to mine and to others, but remember you, and so do I, that we have lost of her but a brethel (*a frail one*), and set it the less to heart, for and she had been good wheresoever she had been, it should not have been as it is, for and she were dead at this hour, she should never be at mine heart as she was. As for the divorce that ye write to me of, I suppose what ye meant, but I charge you upon my blessing that ye do not, nor cause none other to do, that should offend God and your conscience, for and ye do, or cause for to be done, God will take vengeance thereupon, and ye should put yourself and others in great jeopardy, for wot it well, she shall full sore repent her lewdness hereafter, and I pray God she might; so I pray you for mine heart's ease be ye of a good comfort in all things; I trust God shall help right well, and I pray God so do in all our matters; I would ye took heed if there were any labour made in the court of Canterbury for the lewd matter aforesaid.

But if the Duke [of Norfolk] be purveyed for, he and his wise counsel shall leave this country; it is told me that he saith that he will not spare to do that he is purposed [at Caister], for no Duke in England (*Clarence*). God help at need.

On the back of the Letter in an ancient hand is written, "A Lr̄ to Sr. Io. Paston from his mother, touching the good will between hir daughter Margery P. and Ric. Call, who were after maryed together." (F.)

176. On behalf of Our Lady of Walsingham (after 1444)

To my right worshipful Cousin, John Paston, Esquire.

Right worshipful Cousin, I recommend me to you, thanking you as heartily as I can for myself, &c. and especially for that ye do so much for Our Lady's House of Walsingham, which I trust verily ye do the rather for the great Love that ye deem I have thereto; for truly if I be drawn to any worship or welfare, and discharge of mine Enemies' danger, I ascribe it unto Our Lady.

Praying you therefore, that ye will be as friendly to Our Lady's House as I wote (*know*) well ye have alway been, and in especial now, that I might have of you the report certainly by your Letter of that, that Naunton your Cousin informed you, and told you by mouth of all matters touching Our Lady's House of Walsingham; for methinketh by that I have heard by Our Lady's Priest of Walsingham, if I understood well that matter, that it should be much to the good speed of the matter, and doubt you not Our Lady shall quite (*requite*) it you, and her poor Prior hereafter as he may, &c.

Praying you also Cousin, and advising for the ease of us both, and of our Friends, and of many other, that ye be at London by times this term, and if we speed well now, all well all this year after; for I know verily there was never made a greater labour than shall be made now, and therefore I pray to Our Lady, help us, and her blessed Son, which have you in his holy keeping.

Written at your poor place of Bayfield (*i.e. his own home*), on Saint Francis's day (4 *Oct.*), in haste.

Your Cousin,
William Yelverton, Justice.

177. Claim by the Abbot of Langley on Fastolfe's Property (1463)

To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered.

Right worshipful Sir, and tenderly beloved in our Lord God, I commend me to you, sending you knowing that I did your errand to my brother the parson of Blofield (*T. Howes*) on Wednesday was sev'night, after the understanding that I had of you and from you by this bringer, which man I felt right well and favourably disposed to you ward, and more favourably will be than to any other gentleman living, the will of the dead performed, and his conscience saved, and more things said favourably for you, which I entitled in a scroll to have certified to your servant Calle, if he had come, as ye sent me word he should have done, and should as ye behested (*promised*) me, have brought me our ferm for Hellesdon, which not done, causeth me to write, praying your gentleness that I send no more therefore, for it is unpaid for the year afore the Hallowmass that my master Fastolf died, and for the same year that he died in, and since for two years, and five shillings unpaid of a year, and come Michaelmas next shall be another year unpaid, thus is four years unpaid and five shillings, and at Michaelmas next shall be five years and five shillings.

This thus kept from Holy Church, that is Holy Church's good, may not be without great peril of foul; where the peril is God knoweth, I pray God amend it, and give them grace that have his goods so to dispose them, that they and the dead both may be out of peril, and the Trinity have you in his merciful keeping. Written at Langley, on Sunday at even late, next after Saint John's day [the] Decollation, (29 *August*).

By your well-willing,

Abbott of Langley.

178. Claim of the Convent of Norwich for a Bequest in Mortmain (1486)

To two gentlemen of Norfolk [unnamed].

Abridged.

Right worshipful Sirs, We recommend us all unto you in our most hearty wise, and it is so that long and many years there hath been hanging a great variance and a grudge betwix (*a*) Agnes Paston, widow of William Paston, and her sons William and Clement and (*b*) her son John and his sons. And now the said variance continueth betwixt the said William and John that now is living, of . . . the manors of Sporle, Woodhall, Palgrave, Cressingham, Swainsthorp, and East Beckham, all in this country of Norfolk.

Liketh it you to weet that the said William Paston, Justice, in his life was a special lover and friend to our Monastery; and for singular love and trust that he had to be remembered among us after his decease, notwithstanding he died at London, yet he bequested his body to be buried, and [it] is buried in the chapel of Our Lady within our monastery. And the said William Paston, Justice, often and many times in his pleyne (*actual*) life, the said Agnes being present, he showed unto the Prior of our Monastery that was then, called Don John Haverland, and to . . . many divers other . . . that were then old fathers of our monastery, and arn (*are*) now deceased; that it was his very last will, that out of the said manors should be perpetually immortised a certain land or annuity of such value, that every such monk that singeth the last mass in the said chapel, where the body of the said William Paston lyeth buried, should have that day that he sung mass there 4*d.* to pray for the souls of the said William, and of Agnes his wife, and for the ancestors, kindred, consanguinity, affinity, and friends, and for all Christian souls; and, over that, a certain sum of money yearly to be paid, to have the obit of the said William and Agnes yearly kept with Dirige and Mass in the said chapel.

And it is so, that many years after the decease of the said William [the] Justice, there were many men living, both of old brethren of ours afore rehearsed, and of other that could a borne witness in this matter . . . of which men, many now be deceased; and no marvel, for it is upon a 43 year past since the said William [the] Justice, died; and also the said Agnes that was his wife lived more than 30 winters after her husband, and was in singular trust with her husband, and one of his executors, and well known in this country, a woman of virtuous living and disposition, and of good discretion and conscience, and knew her husbands mind and last will, as well as any living creature.

She witnessed alway that it was her husband's last will to have this perpetual mass, and called on it all the days of her life, and also at her decease; and she said that it was the will of her husband that the annuity should go out of the said manor of Swainsthorp . . . the Executors by their common assent left a Coffer with a great substance of money of the goods of the said William [the] Justice, to be kept within our monastery, and told . . . us, that the said good should never be . . . had out of our place till we were made sure of the annuity; and during all the season that the coffer with the goods was within our monastery . . . we had money yearly given us to pray for his soul and to keep his obit; when, by means devised without the knowledge of the said Agnes, or of any of our brethren, all the good that was in the said coffer was conveyed out of our monastery, and after that deed done, there was no more money given us . . . saving that the said Agnes, during her life, gave us of her own costs yearly to remember the soul . . . and this many years there hath no thing been given us, notwithstanding of our own devotion we have rehearsed his name in our bead-roll every Sunday; and now it is informed us, that as well William as John hath put all their title and interest in the award of the Right Reverend Father in God my Lord of Ely, Chancellor of England, Sir Reginald Bray, Knight, and in you twain; and in as much as ye be of

our country, and special friends to our monastery, that maketh me and all my brethren the more bold to show this our matter unto you ; beseeching you both to show it both to my Lord of Ely and to Sir Reginald Bray how that we ought of right to have a grant out of the said manors . . . and all our monastery shall pray for you, and also reward you to your pleasure : and, over that, ye shall do herein such a good deed that God shall reward you. Written in our monastery, the . . . day of . . . the 2d year of the reign of King Harry the vijth.

By JOHN, Prior of Norwich,
and the Convent.

The circumstances have been thus related : John Paston, the son of William, the Judge, procured leave to place a Coffer of his own in the same room in which that containing the goods of his family were deposited, and to which having at all times free access, he by degrees privately took out and conveyed away the valuable treasure contained in the pledged one. (F).

179. A SERMON

An ancient Whitsunday Sermon, preached by Friar Brackley (whose Hand it is) at the Friars Minors Church in Norwich.

FRIENDS, this Holy time as our mother holy Church maketh mention, the Holy Ghost came from Heaven, and lighted in the Disciples of Christ, inflaming them with cunning and strengthening them with grace. And because the doctrine and preaching of them should go throughout all the world first they were to be informed and taught cunning (*skill* or *knowledge*,) and to be strengthened with audacity (*confidence*) and grace, and then to be endowed [with] and given all manner of languages, that they might preach to all manner of nations, so that those nations, that they preached to, might understand them, and every nation his own tongue. And so these Apostles, after that they were inspired with the Holy Ghost, wheresoever they preached, were there never so many nations present, each nation thought that they spoke in their own language, etenim illud loquebantur variis linguis Apostoli.

Friends, three things be necessary in preaching to him that shall preach through the world as the Apostles did, that is to say, cunning, boldness, and languages; if they had had cunning and none audacity, but have feared to have preached, it should little a profited, as we have examples daily at Cambridge, exempli gratia, de Clerico quis studuit sermonem, &c. And if they have both cunning and audacity, and have none eloquency, nor copiousness of language, so that he preach that [which] his Audience is most exercised in, that they understand him, else it profiteth not.

Therefore these holy Apostles before they should preach, first they were to be confirmed and strengthened. Our Lord strengthened them by under-nemyng (*rebuking*), informing, and helping culpando ut in Evangelium recumbentibus, &c.

He strengthened them with his help and grace when he breathed in them, saying "Accipite spiritum sanctum, & quorum remiseritis peccata, remittuntur eis, & quorum retinueritis retenta sunt, &c." (*John* xxix. v. 22, 23.) He strengthened them also by his doctrine, when he said "Petite & accipietis; si quid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis." (*John* xvi. v. 23, 24.) How that ye should pray to God and ask, I taught you on Easter-day; therefore ye shall pray God by good working, right full labouring, and in good deeds persevering.

Friends, ye ought for to ask of God that your joy may be a full joy and perfect; we may never have a full joy in this world, whereas ever among followeth heaviness. A man joyeth sometimes in gold and silver, and in great substance of earthly goods, in beauty of women, but this joy is not perfect, but this joy is not stable, but it is mutable as a shadow; for he that thus joyeth in the beauty of his wife, it may fortune to-morrow he shall follow her to church upon a bier; but if ye will know what is a full and a very joy, truly forgiveness of sin, and everlasting bliss, whereas is never sickness, hunger, nor thirst, nor no manner of disease, but all wealth, joy, and prosperity, &c. There be three manner of joys, the one void, another half full, the third is a full joy; the

first is plenty of worldly goods; the second is ghostly grace; the third is everlasting bliss. The third is everlasting bliss. The first joy, that is affluence of temporal goods, is called a vain joy, for if a man were set at a board with delicate meats and drinks, and he saw a cauldron boiling afore him with pitch and brimstone, in the which he should be thrown naked, as soon as he had dined; for (*if*) he should joy much in his delicious meats, it should be but a vain joy.

Right so doth the joy of a covetous man, if he see what pain his soul shall suffer in hell, for the miskeeping and getting of his goods, he should not joy in his treasure, ut in libro Decalogorum, "Quidam homo dives, &c."

Semiplenum gaudium est quando quis in presenti gaudet & tunc cogitans de futuris dolet; ut in quodam libro Græco. &c. "Quidam Rex Græciæ, &c."[1] here ye may see but half a joy; who should joy in this world, if he remembered him of the pains of the other world? "Non glorietur fortis in fortitudine suâ, nec sapiens in sapientiâ suâ, nec dives in divitiis suis." (*Jer.* ix. 23.) De quibus dicitur, qui confidunt in multitudine divitiarum suarum, quasi oves in inferno positi sunt. (*Psalm* xlviii. xlix. 6, 14.) "Qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur." (*Jer.* ix. 24.). Therefore let us joy in hope of everlasting joy and bliss.

Gaudete quia nomina vestra scripta sunt in cælo, ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum. (*Luc.* x. 20.)

A full joy is in heaven.

Et in hoc apparet, quod magnum gaudium est in cælo, quoniam ibi est gaudium quod "oculus non vidit nec auris audivit, et in cor hominis non ascendit, quæ Deus preparavit diligentibus" (1 *Cor.* ii. 9), et ideo, Fratres, variis linguis loquens, [precor] ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum, vel, habeatis gaudium sempiternum.

[1] Here must have followed an anecdote, as before of the Cambridge clerk.

PART XI

PUBLIC EVENTS AND THEIR EFFECTS

(C) WARWICK'S REVOLT, THE LANCASTRIAN RESTORATION AND THE RETURN OF EDWARD IV., 1469–1471

The split between Warwick and Edward IV. caused a rearrangement of parties. Sir John kept aloof till the battle of Barnet settled matters and made his peace with Edward through the Woodvilles. John-the-Youngest followed his Master, Oxford, to battle, but got a pardon.

SUMMARY OF POLITICAL EVENTS, 1462–1473

1462. Many Lancastrian Lords executed.
1464. Lancastrian Lords defeated in the North, Edward IV. marries Elizabeth Woodville, the Nevilles alienated.
1465. Henry VI. taken and imprisoned in the Tower.
1468. Princess Margaret, Edward's sister, marries Charles the Bold, alliance of England and Burgundy against France.
1469. Clarence marries Warwick's daughter Isabella. He and Warwick instigate revolts. "Robin of Redesdale" (Conyers) defeats Edward, and Warwick imprisons him. Reconciliation announced (Letter 180).
1470. (March) Welles' rising (L) defeated by Edward, who turns on Warwick. Flight of Warwick to France; his daughter Anne married to P. of Wales and alliance made with Q. Margaret and the Lancastrians. (Sept.) Warwick returns, reinstates Henry VI.
1471. Edward flies to Flanders, Duke Charles gives him forces, he sails into the Humber (March). Clarence deserts Warwick. (Ap.) Battle of Barnet and death of Warwick. Henry VI. replaced in the Tower. [Henry VI.'s Restoration is reckoned October, 1470–April, 1471.] (Ap.) Q. Margaret lands at Weymouth on the day of Barnet. Margaret makes for Wales, Edward overtakes her, battle of Tewkesbury, murder of P. of Wales, and of Henry VI.
1473. Oxford and Beaumont seize St. Michael's Mount and stand a siege. Oxford imprisoned 1474–1484, his son dies in the Tower.

PART XI

180. EDWARD IV. (RELEASED BY WARWICK AND CLARENCE) RETURNS TO LONDON (1469)

To Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Mother, I commend me to you, and beseech you of your blessing and God's; thank you for your tenderness and help both to me, my brother, and Servants. (*Then follows an Account of Money, Debts, &c., a Dispute with his Uncle William, and a desire to defer his Sister Margery's marriage with Richard Calle till Christmas, &c.*)

The King is come to London,[1] and there came with him, and rode again [in company with] him, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Suffolk, the Earl of Arundel, the Earl of Northumberland, the Earl of Essex; the Lords Harry and John of Buckingham, the Lord Dacre [W. Fiennes], the Lord Chamberlain [Hastings], the Lord Montjoy [Blount], and many other Knights and Esquires; the Mayor of London, 22 Aldermen, in scarlet, and of the Craftsmen of the Town to the number of 200, all in blue.

The King came through Cheap, though it were out of his way, because [otherwise] he would not be seen; and he was accompanied in all people with 1000 horse, some harnessed and some not.

[1] Warwick could not keep Edward IV. in captivity because he proved to have a strong party—Essex and the Buckinghams, Fiennes, Hastings, Blount, St. Leger, and Suffolk. Arundel was brother-in-law of the three Nevilles—Warwick, Northumberland, and the Archbishop of York. The last, like Clarence, was unreliable. Oxford was Lancastrian and waiting his opportunity. The Woodvilles were conspicuously absent, but they had little power. Harry of Buckingham, younger son of the Duke *&c.* in 1460, was second husband of the Lady Margaret, mother of Henry VII.

My Lord Archbishop [Neville] came with him from York, and is at the Moor [1] and my Lord of Oxford rode to have met the King, and he is with my Lord Archbishop at the Moor; and came not to town with the King. Some say that they were yesterday three miles to the King-wards from the Moor; and that the King sent them a Messenger, that they should come when that he sent for them.

I wot not what to suppose therein.

The King himself hath good language of the Lords of Clarence, of Warwick, and of my Lords of York and of Oxford, saying, they be his best friends; but his household men have other language, so what shall hastily fall I cannot say. My Lord of Norfolk, shall be here this night. I shall send you more when I know more.

Item, if Ebysham [2] come not home with my Uncle William, that then ye send me the two French Books, that he should have written, that he may write them here.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

181. COURTSHIPS AND GOSSIP. EDWARD IV. GOING TO LINCOLNSHIRE TO PUT DOWN THE RISING OF SIR ROBERT WELLES (March, 1470)

To John Paston, Esquire, being at Norwich, be this Letter delivered.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet, &c. (*Here follows an account of bills, and receipts, &c. of no consequence.*)

Item, as for Mistress Katherine Dudley, I have many times recommended you to her, and she is nothing displeased with it; she recketh not how many Gentlemen love her, she is full of love; I have beaten the matter for you, your unknowledge (*without your knowledge*) as I told her; she answered me, that she would [have] no

[1] His seat in Herts.

[2] Ebysham was a Transcriber of Books (*see* Letter 234).

one this two years, and I believe her; for I think, she hath the life that she can hold her content with, I trow she will be a sore labouring woman this two years for the meed of her Soul.

And Mistress Gryseacress is sure to St. Leger with my Lady of Exeter, a foul loss.

Item, I pray you speak with Harcourt of the Abbey, for a little clock, which I sent him by James Gresham to mend, and that ye would get it of him, and it be ready, and send it me; and as for money for his labour, he hath another Clock of mine, which Sir Thomas Lyndes, God have his Soul! gave me; he may keep that till I pay him; this Clock is my Lord Archbishop's, but let not him weet of it, and that it [be] easily carried hither by your advice.

Also as for Oranges I shall send you a certain (*some*) by the next Carrier, and as for Tidings the Bearer hereof shall inform you, ye must give credence to him.

As for my good speed, I hope well, I am offered yet to have Mistress Anne Haulte, and I shall have help enough as some say. . . .

Item, it is so that I am in purpose to come home within a month hereafter, or about Midlent, or before Easter, under your correction, if so be, that ye deem that my Mother would help me to my Costs, 10 marks or thereabouts, I pray you feel her disposition and send me word.

Item, I cannot tell you what will fall of the World, for the King verily is disposed to go into Lincolnshire and men wot not what will fall thereof, nor thereafter, they ween my Lord of Norfolk shall bring 10,000 men.

Item, there is come a new little Turk, which is a well visaged Fellow, of the age of forty years; and he is lower than Manuel by a handful, and lower than my little Tom by the shoulders, and more little above his Pap; and he hath, as he said to the King himself, three or four Children (*Sons*), each one of them as high and as likely as the King himself.

Item, I pray you show, or read to my Mother, such things, as ye think are for her to know, after your

discretion; and to let her understand of the Article of the treaty between Sir William Yelverton and me.

Item, my Lord of Warwick, as it is supposed, shall go with the King into Lincolnshire, some men say that his going shall do good, and some say, that it doth harm.

I pray you ever have an eye to Caister, to know the rule there, and send me word, and whether my wise Lord and my Lady be yet as besotted upon it as they were; and whether my said Lord resorteth thither as often as he did or not; and of the disposition of the Country.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

182. EDWARD IV. ROUTS THE REBELS [LOSECOAT FIELD, IN LINCOLNSHIRE], AND WARWICK AND CLARENCE FLY (March, 1470).

To my Cousin, John Paston.

THE King came to Grantham, and there tarried Thursday [March 15] all day, and there was headed Sir Thomas Dalalaunde and one John Neille a great Captain; and upon the Monday next after that at Doncaster, and there was headed Sir Robert Welles, and another great Captain; and then the King had word, that the Duke of Clarence, and the Earl of Warwick, was at Esterfield, 20 miles from Doncaster; and upon the Tuesday [March 20] at nine of the bell, the King took the field, and mustered his people; and it was said, that were never seen in England so many goodly men, and so well arrayed in a field; and my Lord [Duke of Norfolk] was worshipfully accompanied, no Lord there so well; wherefore the King gave my Lord a great thank.

And when the Duke of Clarence, and the Earl of Warwick heard that the King was coming to themward, incontinent they departed, and went to Manchester in Lancashire, hoping to have had help and succour of the Lord Stanley; but in conclusion, there they had little

favour, as it was informed the King; and, so men say, they went westward, and, some men deem, to London.

And when the King heard they were departed and gone, he went to York, and came thither the Thursday next after, and there came in to him all the Gentlemen of the Shire; and, upon Our Lady Day, made Percy Earl of Northumberland, and he that was Earl afore,[1] Marquis Montagu; and so the King is purposed to come Southward, God send him good speed.

Written the 27th day of March.

FOR TRUTH.

183. WARWICK AND CLARENCE, HAVING JOINED THE LANCASTRIANS IN FRANCE, PREPARE TO INVADE ENGLAND (Aug., 1470)

To J. Paston, &c.

BROTHER, I commend me to you, &c. (*Here follows an order about searching for some Writings, &c.*) Also tell John Pampyng that the Maid at the Bull at Cludneys at Westminster, sent me, on a time by him, to the Moor, a Ring of Gold to a token, which I had not of him; wherefore I would that he should send it hither, for she must have it again, or else 5*s.* for it was not hers. I pray you be ready, the matter quickeneth both for you and yours, as well as for us and ours.

As for tidings, my Lord Archbishop [G. Neville] is at the Moor, but there is beleft with him diverse of the King's servants; and, as I understand, he hath licence to tarry there till he be sent for. There be many Folks up in the North, so that Percy (*the restored Earl*) is not able to resist them; and so the King hath sent for his Feodmen (*retainers*) to come to him, for he will go to put them down; and some say, that the King should come again to London, and that in haste; and as it is said, Courtneys be landed in Devonshire, and there rule.

[1] John Neville, Earl of Northumberland, brother to the Earl of Warwick; apparently even at this time the King dared not punish him. The restoration of Percy offended the new Marquis, who lost by it.

Item, that the Lords Clarence and Warwick will assay to land in England every day, as Folks fear.

I pray you let not John Mylsent be long from me, with as much [money] as can be gathered; and also that ye write to me of all things that I have written to you for, so that I may have answer of every thing.

Other things Batchelor Walter, bearer hereof shall inform you. Written at London, the Sunday next before Saint Lawrence's day (10 *August*).

Also my brother Edmund is not yet remembered; he hath not to live with, think on him, &c.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

184. EDWARD IV. SUMMONING HIS RETAINERS (Sept., 1470)

To our well-beloved William Swan, Gentleman.

Rex Edwardus. By the King.

TRUSTY and well beloved we greet you well, and for so much as we be credibly ascertained that our ancient enemies of France and our outward rebels and traitors be drawn together in accord, and intend hastily to land in our country of Kent, or in the parts thereof near adjoining, with great might and power of Frenchmen utterly to destroy us and our true Subjects, and to subvert the common weal of the same our Realm.

This Warrant, under the King's Signature and Privy Seal, seems to have been issued in 1470, after the escape of Edward from his confinement at Middleham Castle, and after his having defeated the Lord Wells near Stamford, when the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick, retiring into France, were reconciled to Queen Margaret, and aided by Lewis XI. meditated an invasion of England in favour of Henry VI.

This invasion they accomplished, and landed at Dartmouth in September; on their march they daily increased in numbers, when Edward, on their approach towards him and proclaiming Henry VI. was seized with such a panic that, retreating towards the seashore on the Norfolk Coast, he embarked aboard a small vessel, and after several escapes from Corsairs, &c., he landed safely in Holland, when Henry for a few months re-ascended the throne. (F.)

We straitly charge and command you, upon the faith and liegeance that ye bear unto us, that ye a-ready you with all the fellowship ye can make, and as soon as ye may understand that they land in our said county or nearby, that ye draw thither, as we have commanded other our Subjects to do, and put you in uttermost devoir with them to resist the malice of our said enemies and traitors; and if they and ye be not of power so to do, that then ye draw you to our city of London, by which time we trust to be there in our own person or nearby; and if we be not that, that then ye do farther all ye shall be commanded by our Council there, upon the pain above said.

Given under our Signet, at our City of York, the 7th day of September.

But, Warwick having entered London, Edward IV. fled to the Court of Burgundy.

185. Henry VI. restored, October, 1470—April, 1471. Lancastrians in power. John the Youngest in favour.

To my right worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

After humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing. Please it you to weet, that, blessed be God, my Brother and I be in good hele; and I trust that we shall do right well in all our matters hastily; for my Lady of Norfolk hath promised to be ruled by my Lord of Oxford in all such matters as belong to my brother and to me; and as for my Lord of Oxford, he is better Lord to me, by my truth, than I can wish him in many matters; for he sent to my Lady of Norfolk by John Bernard only for my matter, and for none other cause, mine unweeting, or without any prayer of me, for when he sent to her I was at London, and he at Colchester, and that is a likelihood he remembered me.

The Duke and the Duchess sue to him as humbly as

ever I did to them; insomuch that my Lord of Oxford shall have the rule of them and theirs, by their own desires and great means.

As for the Offices, that ye wrote to my brother for and to me, they be for no poor men; but I trust we shall speed of other offices meetly for us. For my Master the Earl of Oxford biddeth me ask and have. I trow my brother Sir John shall have the Constableship of Norwich Castle, with 20*l.* of Fee, all the Lords be agreed to it.

Tidings, the Earl of Worcester [1] is like to die this day, or to morrow at the farthest; John Pilkington, M. W. at Clyff, and Fowler are taken, and in the Castle of Pomfret, and are like to die hastily, without they be dead. Sir Thomas Montgomery and Joudone be taken, what shall fall of them I cannot say.

The Queen that was, and the Duchess of Bedford be in Sanctuary at Westminster; the Bishop of Ely [Gray] with other Bishops are in Saint Martin's; when I hear more, I shall send you more; I pray God send you all your desires. Written at London on Saint Edward's even.

Your Son and humble Servant,
J. PASTON.

Mother, I beseech you, that Brome may be spoken to, to gather up my Silver at Guyton in all haste possible, for I have no money. Also that it like you, that John Milsent may be spoken to, to keep well my Grey Horse, an he be alive, and that he spare no meat on him, and that he have cunning Leeches to look to him. As for my coming home, I know no certainty, for I tarry till my Lady of Norfolk come to go through with the matters, and she shall not be here till Sunday.

[1] John Tiptoft, Lord Treasurer and Lord Constable, absconded on the departure of his Royal Master, but was taken in Weybridge Forest, in Huntingdonshire, concealed in a tree; and being brought to the Tower, was there beheaded upon a charge of cruelty. (F.) As Constable he condemned men not according to English Law, and earned the title of "The Butcher of England."

186. The Duke of Suffolk pays the Militiamen (1470)

To the Bailiffs, Constables, and Chamberlains of our Borough of Eye, and to every each (one) *of them.*

The Duke of Suffolk.

For as much as Edmund Lee and John Barker, which were waged for your town, to await upon us in the King's [Edward's] service to Lincoln Field, and from thence to Exeter and [back] again; and for that season, as we be informed, they are not yet fully contented and paid of their wages; wherefore, upon the sight hereof, we will and charge that ye without any longer delay pay them their whole duties (*dues*) according [to] the covenant that ye made with them, and ye fail not hereof, as ye intend our pleasure. Written at Wingfield, the 22d day of October.

Suffolk.

This Letter by the date appears to have been written just about the time of Edward's leaving the kingdom, when Henry VI. was reinstated on the throne, unless the payment of the men had been longer delayed, if so, it was not written till after Edward's return and re-accession. (F.)

John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, died in 1491, he succeeded in retaining his dignity and part of his property through all political and royal changes, avoiding compromising himself for his brother-in-law Edward IV., or for his own sons under Henry VII.

187. Earl of Oxford collects Retainers (March, 1471)

To my right dear and well beloved Brother, Thomas Veer.

Right dear and well beloved Brother, I commend me heartily unto you; certifying you that I have received your writing, directed now last unto me, by my servant William Cooke, by which I understand the faithful guiding and disposition of the Country to my great Comfort and Pleasure; which I doubt not shall redound to the greatest praising and worship that ever did till

any Country. . . . I have disposed me with all the power that I can make in Essex and Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and other places, to be on Monday next coming at Bury, which purpose I intend to observe with God's Grace towards you into Norfolk, to the assistance of you and the Country, in case Edward with his Company had arrived there, and yet I shall do the same notwithstanding; for if he arrive Northward, like as ye weet by likelyhood he should, I cast (*intend*) to follow and pursue him, and where[as] ye desire that I should send you word what disposition shall be taken in the Country where ye be, I desire you, that ye, by the advice of the Gentlemen which be there, chuse three or four and send them to me at Bury on Monday next; and then I and they, with my Council, shall take a direction for the surety of all that Country by God's grace; by whom I shall send then to you relation, whether ye shall remain still there yourself, or resort to me with all those that be accompanied with you, and Jesu preserve you. At Hedingham the 14th day of March.

By your loving Brother,
OXYNFORD.

Hollingshed informs us, that Edward came before Cromer, in Norfolk, on the 12th of March, where he sent on shore Sir Robert Chamberlaine, Sir Gilbert Debenham, and others, to understand how the Country stood affected. They found the vigilance of the Earl of Oxford, and the great preparations he had made, were such, that it would be unsafe to land, and therefore they steered Northwards. (F.)

188. THE DUKE OF CLARENCE DESERTS WARWICK FOR EDWARD IV. (April, 1471)

To the right worshipful and special Singular Master, Sir John Paston, knight, be this delivered.

AFTER due recommendation had, with all my service, &c. (*Here follow Copies of Indictments and Appeals procured against Sir John Paston, and his Servants;—and likewise other Law business.*)

As for tidings, here in this Country be many Tales, and none accord with other; it is told me by the Under

Sheriff, that my Lord of Clarence is gone to his Brother late King; insomuch that his men have the Gorget[1] on their breasts, and the Rose over it. And it is said, that the Lord Howard hath proclaimed King Edward King of England in Suffolk.

Yours, and at your Commandment,
JAMES GRESHAM.

189. AFTER THE BATTLE OF BARNET: WELL WITH BOTH SIDES (April, 1471)

To my Mother.

[John the Youngest fought under the Earl of Oxford on the Lancastrian and Warwick's side.]

MOTHER, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that, blessed be God, my brother John is alive and fareth well, and in no peril of death; nevertheless he is hurt with an Arrow on his right arm, beneath the elbow; and I have sent him a Surgeon, which hath dressed him, and he telleth me, that he trusteth that he shall be all whole within right short time.

It is so that John Milsent is dead, God have mercy on his Soul! and William Milsent is alive, and his other Servants all be escaped by all likelihood.

Item, as for me, I am in good case blessed be God; and in no jeopardy of my life, as me list myself; for I am at my liberty if need be.

Item, my Lord Archbishop[2] is in the Tower; nevertheless I trust to God, that he shall do well enough; he hath a Safeguard for him and me both; nevertheless we have been troubled since, but now I understand, that he hath a Pardon; and so we hope well.

There was killed upon the Field, half a mile from Barnet, on Easter day, the Earl of Warwick,[3] the

[1] A Gorget—platearmour for the neck—appears as a badge of Edward IV., who also gave collars to his supporters.

[2] George Neville, Archbishop of York; it was from the custody of this Prelate, that Edward escaped, after having been surprised and taken Prisoner by the Earl of Warwick, in 1470; perhaps the kind treatment of his then Prisoner now procured his pardon. (F.)

[3] His body and Montagu's were exposed three days to public view

Marquis Montagu, Sir William Tyrell, Sir Lewis Johns, and divers other Esquires of our Country, Godmerston and Booth.

And on the King Edward's party, the Lord Cromwell [Bourchier], the Lord Say [R. Fiennes], Sir Humphrey Bourchier of our Country, which is a sore mourned man here; and other people of both Parties to the number of more than a thousand.[1]

As for other tidings, [it] is understood here, that the Queen Margaret is verily landed and her Son, in the West Country, and I trow that as to-morrow or else the next day, the King Edward will depart from hence to her-ward, to drive her out again.

Item, I beseech you that I may be recommended to my Cousin Lomner, and to thank him for his good will to me-ward, if I had had need, as I understood by the Bearer hereof; and I beseech you on my behalf to advise him to be well ware of his dealing or language as yet, for the world, I assure you, is right queasy (*unsettled*) as ye shall know within this month; the People here feareth it sore.

God hath shewed himself marvellously like him that made all, and can undo again when him list; and I can think that by all likelihood shall shew himself as marvellous again, and that in short time; and, as I suppose, oftener than once in cases like.

Item, it is so, that my Brother is unpurveyed of money, I have holpen him to my power and above; wherefore, as it pleaseth you, remember him, for [I] cannot purvey for myself in the same case.

Written at London the Thursday in Easter week.

I hope hastily to see you. All this bill must be secret. Be ye not adoubted (*suspicious*) of the world, I trust all shall be well; if it thus continue, I am not all undone, nor none of us; and if otherwise then, &c., &c.

[*No signature.*]

in St. Paul's Cathedral, and then conveyed to, and buried at Bisham Abbey, in Berkshire. (F.)

[1] The Battle of Barnet began on the morning, and lasted till afternoon of Easter Sunday, the 14th of April, 1471. (F.)

190. After Barnet and before Tewkesbury. Earl of Oxford to his Countess (1471)

To the right reverend and worshipful Lady.

Right reverend and worshipful Lady, I recommend me to you, letting you weet that I am in great heaviness at the making of this Letter; but thanked be God, I am escaped myself, and suddenly departed from my men; for I understand my Chaplain would have betrayed me; and if he come into the Country, let him be made sure, &c.

Also ye shall give credence to the Bringer of this letter, and I beseech you to reward him to his costs; for I was not in power at the making of this letter to give him, but as I was put in trust by favour of strange people, &c.

Also ye shall send me in all haste all the ready money that ye can make; and as many of my men, as can come well horsed, and that they come in diverse parcels.

Also that my best horses be sent with my steel saddles, and bid the Yeoman of the horse cover them with leather.

Also ye shall send to my Mother, and let her weet of this letter, and pray her of her blessing, and bid her send me my Casket, by this token; *that she hath the Key thereof, but it is broken.*

Also ye shall send to the Prior of Thetford, and bid him send me the Sum of Gold that he said that I should have; also say to him by this token; *that I shewed him the first Privy Seal, &c.*

Also let Paston, Felbrig, and Brews, come to me.

Also ye shall deliver the bringer of this letter an horse, saddle, and bridle.

Also ye shall be of good cheer, and take no thought, for I shall bring my purpose about now by the grace of God, Who have you in keeping.

O . . . . . D.

191. Before Tewkesbury. John the Youngest in High Spirits (April, 1471)

A Letter of John Paston, Esq., to his Mother.

After humble and most due recommendation, in as humble wise as I can, I beseech you of your blessing, praying God to reward you with as much pleasure and heart's ease as I have lateward caused you to have trouble and thought; and, with God's grace, it shall not be long-to or-than (*before*) my wrongs and other men's shall be redressed, for the world was never so like to be ours as it is now; wherefore I pray you let Lumnor not be too busy as yet [in procuring pardons from Edward IV].

Mother, I beseech you, and ye may spare any money, that ye will do your alms on me and send me some in as hasty wise as is possible; for by my troth my leechcraft and physic and rewards to them that have kept me and conducted me to London hath cost me since Easter day more than five pounds, and now I have neither meat, drink, clothes, leechcraft, nor money but upon borrowing; and I have assayed my friends so far, that they begin to fail now in my greatest need that ever I was in. Also, mother, I beseech you, and my horse that was at leechcraft at the Holt be not taken up for the King's hawks (*i.e. dead and carrion*), that he may be had home and kept in your place, and not to go out to water, nor no whither else, but that the gate be shut, and he to be chased after water within the place, and that he have as much meat as he may eat; I have hay enough of mine own, and as for oats, Dollys will purvey for him, or who that doth it, I will pay; and I beseech you that he have every week three bushels of oats, and every day a pennyworth of bread; and if Botonor be not at Norwich, and Sym keep him, I shall give him well for his labour.

Also that Philip Loveday put the other horse to grass there, as he and I were accorded.

Item, that Botoner send me hither the two shirts that

were in my casket, and that he send me hither forty shillings by the next messenger that cometh to London.

Item, that Mistress Broom send me hither three long gowns, and two doublets, and a jacket of plunket (*blue*) camblet, and a murrey (*dark red*) bonnet, out of my coffer. Sir James [Gloys] hath the key, as I sent her word before this.

Item, that such other writings and stuff as was in my casket, be in your keeping, and that nobody look [over] my writings.

Item, that the horse that Purdy hath of mine, be put to some good grass in haste; and if it please you to have knowledge of our royal person, I thank God I am whole of my sickness, and trust to be clean whole of all my hurts within a sev'night at the farthest, by which time I trust to have other tidings; and those tidings once had, I trust not to be long out of Norfolk, with God's grace, whom I beseech preserve you and yours for my part. Written the last day of April.

The Bearer hereof can tell you tidings, such as be true for very certain. Your humblest Servant,

JOHN OF GELSTON.[1]

192. AFTER TEWKESBURY. JOHN GETS A PARDON FROM EDWARD IV. (July, 1471)

To my Most Worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT Worshipful Mother, I recommend me to you, and as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing. Please you to understand that this Wednesday Sir Thomas Wingfield sent to me, and let me weet that the King had signed my bill of pardon, which the said Sir Thomas delivered me; and so by Friday, at the farthest, I trust to have my pardon ensealed by the Chancellor, and soon after, so as I can furnish me, I

[1] Gerlyston, Gelderstone, or Gelston had been the home of Margaret Paston's mother and her second husband, R. Garneys. Probably on her death it had become John's property, as he frequently alludes to his *own* money.

trust to see you, if so be that any of the King's house come into Norwich.

I would fain my grey horse were kept in mew, for gnats. Also, Mother, I beseech you that Dollys and his fellow may be sent to, that I may have my money, ready against that I come home, which is due to be paid, for this matter hath cost me [much] the setting on. Also that it may please you that Purdy at Hellesdon may be sent to for the horse that he hath of mine, and that the horse may be kept well, and have as much meat as he will eat betwixt this and [the time] that I come home; and that Jack's nag have meat enough also. Also and Sir Thomas Wingfield come to Norwich, that he may have as good cheer as it please you to make unto that man, that I am most beholden to for his great kindness and good-will; for he taketh full my part against my greatest enemies, Brandon[1] and his brother William; for at my first coming to Sir Thomas Wingfield, both William Wingfield and William Brandon the younger were with Sir Thomas, and had great words to mine own mouth, and in chief William Wingfield; and wheresoever he may meet me on even ground, he will do much, but and we meet evenly, no fears, so I have your blessing.

I pray you, without it be to my Lady Calthorpe, let there be but few words of this pardon. No more, but I pray God preserve you and yours. Written the Wednesday before Mary Magdalen (22d July). By your humblest Son,

JOHN PASTON.

193. SIR JOHN BESTOWS ADVICE (July, 1471)

To Mrs. Margaret Paston, or to John Paston, Esquire, her Son, in haste.

RIGHT well beloved Brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet, that I am in welfare I thank God, and

[1] Wm. Brandon the younger, nephew of the Wingfields (F.) was standard-bearer to Henry VII. at Bosworth, where he fell. He was father of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, the favourite of Henry VIII, *cf.* p. 249 for Edward's slight to the elder Brandon.

have been ever since that I spake last with you; and marvel sore, that ye sent never writing to me since ye departed; I heard never since that time any word out of Norfolk; ye might at Bartholomew fair[1] have had Messengers enough to London, and if ye had sent to Wykes, he should have conveyed it to me. I heard yesterday, that a Worsted man of Norfolk, that sold Worsteds at Winchester, said, that my Lord of Norfolk and my Lady were on Pilgrimage at Our Lady [of Walsingham] on foot, and so they went to Caister; and that at Norwich one should have had large language to you, and called you Traitor, and picked many quarrels to you; send me word thereof; it were well done, that ye were a little surer of your pardon than ye be, avise you, I deem ye will hereafter else repent you.

I understand that Bastard Fauconbridge[2] is either headed, or like to be, and his brother both; some men say he would have deserved it, and some say nay.

I purpose to be at London the first day of the term, send me word whether ye shall be there or not.

Item, I would weet whether ye have spoken with my Lady of Norfolk, or not, and of her disposition and the household's to me and to you-wards, and whether it be a possible [thing] to have Caister again and their Good Wills, or not.

And also I pray you understand what Fellowship and Guiding is in Caister; and have a Spy resorting in and out, so may ye know the secrets amongst them.

There is much ado in the North, as men say; I pray you beware of your Guiding, and in chief of your language, so that from henceforth, by your language no man perceive, that ye favour any person contrary to the King's pleasure.

I understand that the Lord Rivers hath Licence of the King to go to Portugal now within this seven-night [on a Pilgrimage (F.)].

I pray you recommend me to my Mother, and beseech her of her blessing on my behalf. (*Here follow some directions about payments of money.*)

[1] The famous Fair in Smithfield.

[2] See App. I.

Item, I pray you send me word, if any of our Friends or Wellwillers be dead, for I fear that there is great death in Norwich, and in other Borough Towns in Norfolk; for I ensure you, it is the most universal Death that ever I wist in England; for by my truth, I cannot hear by Pilgrims that pass the country, nor none other man that rideth or goeth any country, that any Borough Town in England is free from that Sickness; God cease it, when it please him.

Wherefore for God's sake, let my Mother take heed to my young Brethren, that they be not in none place where that Sickness is reigning, nor that they disport not with none other young people, which resorteth where any sickness is; and if there be any of that sickness dead or infect in Norwich, for God's sake, let her send them to some friend of hers into the country, and do ye the same by mine advice; let my Mother rather remove her household into the country.

Even now Thyrston brought me word from London, that is was Doctor Allen that caused your trouble that ye had at Norwich; and that John Pampyng rode for a discharge for you, and that he hath sped well, but how, that wot I not; if ye be clear out of Doctor Allen's danger (*debt*) keep you there, and hereafter ye may shove as well at his cart; I pray you send me word of all the form of his dealing with you.

I had almost spoken with Mrs. Anne Hault, but I did not, nevertheless this next term I hope to take one way with her or other; she is agreed to speak with me, and she hopeth to do me ease, as she saith.

I pray you send me word how ye do with my Lady Elizabeth Bourchier, ye have a little chafed it, but I cannot tell how; send me word whether ye be in better hope or worse.

I hear say that the Earl of Oxford's Brethren be gone out of Sanctuary. Sir Thomas Fulford is gone out of Sanctuary, and a great Fellowship fetched him, a three score, and they say, that within five miles of London he was 200 men, and no man weeteth where he is become, not yet. The Lords Hastings and Howard

be in Calais, and have it peaceably; and Sir Walter Wrottesly and Sir Jeffrey Gate be coming thence, and will be at London this day as it is said.

Written at Waltham beside Winchester the day next Holy Rood day (14 *Sept.*).

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

194. MONEY. THE PESTILENCE (Nov., 1471)

Margaret Paston to John Paston the Youngest.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that mine Cousin Clere hath sent to me for the C marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) that I borrowed of her for your brother; it fortuned so that a friend of hers lately hath lost better than CCC marks and he sent to her for money, and she had none that she might come by, and therefore she sent to me for the said C marks, and I know not how to do therefore by my troth, for I have it not, nor I cannot make shift therefore and I should go to prison, therefore commune with your brother hereof, and send me word how that he will make shift therefore in haste, I must else needs sell all my woods, and that shall disavail him better than a CC marks and I die; and if I should sell them now, there will no man give so much for them by near an C marks as they be worth, because there be so many wood sales in Norfolk at this time; therefore let him make purveyance therefore in haste, as he will have my good-will, and will that I save him the said woods to the better avail, and send me word hereof in haste if ye will my avail, for I shall never be in quiet till I know an end in this, for she hath therefore an obligation of an C*l.* and it is not kept close, there be many person now knows it, which me seemeth a great rebuke to me that I departed so largely with your brother (*gave your brother so liberally*) that I reserved not to pay that I was endangered for him (*was engaged to pay for him*), and so have divers said to me which of late have known it; and when I remember it, it is to my heart a very

spear, considering that he never gave me comfort therein, nor of all the money that hath been received will never make shift, therefore and he had yet before this time have sent me L marks thereof, yet I would have thought that he had had some consideration of mine danger that I have put me in for him. Remember him how that I have excused him of £20 that the Prior of Bromholm had, which should else have been in that danger, that it should have been to us a great rebuke, without that he might have been holpen with such money as he should have had of your father's bequest; and I paid to the Sheriff for him also money; all these should have helped well thereto, beside other things that I have borne this year that I speak not of; therefore let him help me now, or else it shall disavail him better than the treble the money, whether that I live or die, without he hath better consideration to the danger that I stand in. Also I would ye should move him to take John Pampyng to him, or else to get him a service in the Chancery or some other place where he might be preferred, for it is pity that he loseth his time so here, and it is none avail to none of us; and for divers other things which ye shall know hereafter, I would that he were hence in haste, for all manner of haps, construe ye, &c. I con you thank for your letter that ye sent me, and that ye have inquired of such things as ye think that shall please me. I send you the box, and the deeds that ye sent to me for, but as for the key of the coffer in the utter (*outward*) chamber I cannot find it, if the box had been therein ye could not have had it, but if I had broke up the coffer, therefore remember you where ye have done the key; I keep still the key that ye sent me, till that ye come home.

As for tidings here, your Cousin Berney of Witchingham is passed to God, whom God assoil! Weyley's wife, and London's wife, and Pycard, the baker of Tombland, been gone also; all this household and this parish is as ye left it, blessed be God; we live in fear, but we wot not whither to flee for to be better than we

be here. I send you half a rial (5*s.*) for to buy with sugar, figs, and dates, for me, I pray ye do as well as ye can, and send it me as hastily as ye may, and send me word what price a pound of pepper, cloves, mace, ginger, cinnamon, almonds, rice, galingale, saffron, raisins of Corinth (*currants*), greynes, and comfits, of each of these send me the price of a pound, and if it be better cheap at London than it is here, I shall send you money to buy with such as I will have. Remember that I spake to you to speak to your brother for the said C marks, when ye departed hence; I trow you forgot it, that ye sent me none answer thereof in any wise. Let me have an answer thereof in haste, and send me word how your brother and ye speed in your matters, and God's blessing and mine may ye have both and send you good speed in all your matters. Written in haste on Saint Leonard's even (5 Nov.). I warn you keep this letter close and lose it not, rather burn it.

By your Mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

The nature of bonds is here pointed out; we find that to an obligation of £100 the condition annexed is for the payment of 100 marks, or £66 13*s.* 4*d.*, which is only one-third less than the sum expressed in the bond: the usual method now [1789] is to make the bond for double the sum mentioned in the condition. (F.)

195. SIR JOHN'S OPTIMISM (Jan., 1472)

To my most honourable and Tender Mother Margaret Paston, be this Letter delivered.

MOST Worshipful and kind Mother, I commend me to you, and beseech you of your daily blessing and remembrance. Please it you to weet, that I have my Pardon, as the Bearer hereof can inform you, for comfort whereof I have been the merrier this Christmas; and have been part thereof with Sir George Browne, and with my Lady mine Aunt his wife; and before Twelfth I came to my Lord Archbishop [of York, Neville], where I have had as great Cheer, and been as welcome as I

can desire; and if I had been in surety that Caister were had again, I would have come home this day.

(*Here follow directions about Caister, and a hope that it might be had again by the latter end of the term, when he would come home, and put his lands and houses into order.*) And I beseech you to remember my Brother to do his devoir that I may have again my stuff, my books, and vestments, and my Bedding howsoever he do, though I should give 20^{ty} Scutas by his advice to my Lady Brandon, or some other good Fellow.

As for any tidings there be none here, save that the King hath kept a royal Christmas; and now they say, that hastily he will North, and some say, that he will into Wales, and some say, that he will into the West Country. As for Queen Margaret, I understand that she is removed from Windsor to Wallingford, nigh to Ewelm, my Lady of Suffolk's Place in Oxfordshire.[1]

And men say, that the Lord Rivers (*Anthony, now Earl*) shipped on Christmas Even into Portugal ward; I am not certain.

Also there shall be a Convocation of the Clergy in all haste, which men deem, will avail the King (*pay him a tax of*) a Dime (*Dixieme, Tenth*) and an half, some say. I beseech God send you good health and greater joy in one year than ye have had these seven. Written at the Moor the 8th day of January, in the 11th of Edward IV.

By your Son,
JOHN PASTON, Knight.

196. ILLWILL BETWEEN CLARENCE AND GLOUCESTER (Feb., 1472)

To John Paston, Esquire, be this Letter delivered.

BROTHER, I commend me to you, and pray you to look up my Temple of Glass (*the poem*), and send it me by the Bearer hereof.

Item, as for tidings, I have spoken with Mrs. Anne

[1] She remained a prisoner till 1475, when Louis XI. paid her ransom of 50,000 crowns.

Hault, at a pretty leisure, and blessed be God, we be as far forth as we were tofore, and so I hope we shall continue; and I promised her, that at the next leisure, that I could find thereto, that I would come again and see her; which will take a leisure as [I] deem now, since this observance is over done; I purpose not to tempt God no more so.

Yesterday the King, the Queen, my Lords of Clarence, and Gloucester, went to Shene to pardon; men say, not all in charity; what will fall, men cannot say.

The King entreateth my Lord of Clarence for my Lord of Gloucester; and as it is said, he answereth, that he may well have my Lady his Sister in Law, but they shall part no livelode as he saith, so what will fall can I not say.[1]

This day I purpose to see my Lady of Norfolk again, in good hour be it!

There is proffered me Merchants for Sporle wood, God send me good Sale, when I begin; that poor Wood is sore menaced and threat.

Yet wot I not whether I come home before Easter or not, I shall send you word; no more, &c.

Written the first Tuesday of Lent.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

[1] Clarence, having married a daughter of Warwick, intended to keep the entire inheritance and is said to have made Anne, Prince Edward's widow, hide in disguise in a mean street in London. Gloucester, marrying her, was entitled to half Warwick's estates, but obtained the whole on Clarence's disgrace and death.

PART XII

SIR JOHN'S ACTIVITIES AT COURT AND AT HOME

Calais as the Resort for Fashion and Intrigues

SUMMARY OF POLITICAL EVENTS, 1473–1483

1473. Quarrel between Clarence and Gloucester begins.
1474. Edward allies with Duke Charles against Louis XI. Preparations at Calais. Benevolences exacted.
1475. Edward crosses to France but is bought off by Louis XI.
1477. Duke Charles defeated and slain by the Swiss.
1478. Clarence accused, attainted and murdered.
1479. Pestilence.
1483. April, Edward IV. dies.

PART XII

197. Sir John's Extravagance. The Troublesome Chaplain (July, 1472)

To my Right Worshipful Brother, Sir John Paston, Knight.

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, certifying that I have spoken with Master John Smyth for Sir Thomas Lynde's will, and he hath showed me your bill which ye ask to be content of; your bill alone draweth four marks and odd money, for ye have set in your bill, for wax alone, 20*s.* which to Master John Smyth's imagination, and to all other Officers of the Court, should not draw past 20*d.* at his burying (*i.e. for wax candles*). The bills that be put into the Court of Sir T. Lynde's debts draw 30*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.* and all the money that can be made of his house and goods in this country draweth but 5*l.* Master J. Smyth would ye should send him into the Court an inventory of such goods as Sir Thomas had at London when he died, and that inventory once had, ye shall have as cometh to your part and more also; ye must send the certainty whether the wax be 20*s.* or 20*d.*; and as for the Friars, Master John will not allow them a penny, for he saith, "where the debts may not be paid, set the bequests at nought"; he is agreed to pay the Apothecary, after that he have the inventory from you.

Rysing, I trow, hath been with you.

Item, as for John Maryot, I have sent to him for the 40*s.* but I have none answer.

Item, I have spoken with Barker, and he hath no

money nor none can get till harvest, when he may distrain the crop upon the ground; he saith there is not owing past five marks and on Saturday next coming he shall send me a view of his account, which I shall send you, as soon as I have it; as for Fastolf's five marks, J. Wyndham hath been spoken to by me half-a-dozen times to send to him for it, and he saith he hath done so.

Item, Sir John Styll hath told Jude when ye shall have the chalice, ask Jude of your cruets also.

Item, the proud, peevish, evil-disposed priest to us all, Sir James, [Gloys] saith, that ye commanded him to deliver the book of Seven Sages to my brother Walter, and he hath it.

Item, I send you the certainty herewith of as much as can be inquired for my uncle William's claim in Caister; these articles that fail, the tenants of Caister shall inquire them, and send them to me hastily; they have promised, and they come, ye shall have them sent you by the next messenger that cometh to London.

Item, my mother sendeth you word that she hath neither Master Robert Popy's Obligation nor the Bishop's.

Item, my mother would ye should in all haste get her acquittance of the Bishop of Winchester for Sir John Fastolf's goods, she prayed you to make it sure by the advice of your counsel, and she will pay for the costs.

Item, she prayeth you to speak to the said Bishop for to get Master Clement Felmingham the eight marks by year during his life that Sir John Fastolf beset him; she prayed you to get him an assignment for it to some manor in Norfolk or in Lothingland [in Suffolk].

Item, she would ye should get you another house to lay in your stuff, such as came from Caister, she thinketh one of the Friars is a fair house [to rent]; she purposeth to go into the country, and there to sojourn once a year. Many quarrels are picked to get my brother Edmund and me out of her house; we go not to bed unchidden lightly (*easily*); all that we do is

ill done, and all that Sir James and Peacock doth is well done; Sir James and I be twain: we fell out before my mother, with "thou proud priest," and "thou proud squire," my mother taking his part, so I have almost beshut the bolt (*barred myself out*), as for my mother's house; yet summer shall be done, ere I get me any master.

My mother proposeth hastily to take estate in all her lands, and upon that estate to make her will of the said lands, part to give to my younger brethren for term of their lives, and after to remain to you; part to my sister Anne's marriage, till an hundred pounds be paid; part for to make her aisle at Mawtby; part for a priest to sing for her, and my father, and their ancestors; and in this anger between Sir James and me, she hath promised me that my part shall be nought; what yours shall be I cannot say; God speed the plough. I'faith ye must purvey for my brother Edmund to go over with you [to Calais], or he is undone; he will bring twenty nobles (£10) in his purse. My mother will neither give nor lend none of you both a penny forward; purvey a mean to have Caister again ere ye go over; my Lord and my Lady [of Norfolk], which for certain is great with child, be weary thereof, and all the household also.

If ye will any other thing to be done in this country, send me word, and I shall do as well as I can with God's grace, who preserve you.

Written the 8th day of July.

I pray you recommend me to my Lord of Arran, Sir John Parr, Sir George Browne, Osbert Berney, R. Hyde, J. Hoxson my cousin, his wife Kate, W. Wood, and all.

I pray burn this before (*rather than*) losing [it].

Your,

JOHN PASTON.

Margaret Paston bequeathed money to build a South aisle at Mautby Church. It was built, and her tomb made there, but has long since fallen again to ruin.

198. SIR JOHN TRIES TO GET INTO PARLIAMENT AND (TOO LATE) TO PLACATE THE DUKE (Sept., 1472)

To my right worshipful Brother Sir John Paston, Knight.

[Abridged.]

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that your desire, as for the Knights of the Shire, was an impossible [thing] to be brought about; for my Lord of Norfolk and my Lord of Suffolk, were agreed, more than a fortnight ago, to have Sir Robert Wingfield, and Sir Richard Harcourt, and that knew I not till Friday last past. I had sent, ere I went to Framlingham, to warn as many of your friends, to be at Norwich, as this Monday, to serve your intent, as I could; but when I came to Framlingham, and knew the appointment that was taken for the two Knights, I sent warning again to as many as I might, to tarry at home; and yet there came to Norwich this day as many as their costs drew to 9*s.* 1*d.* ½. paid and reckoned by Peacock and R. Capron; and yet they did but break their fasts and departed; and I thanked them in your name, and told them that ye would have no voice (*vote*) as this day, for ye supposed not to be in England when the Parliament should be; and so they came not at the Shire-house, for if they had, it was thought by such as be your friends here, that your Adversaries would have reported, that ye had made labour to have been one, and that ye could not bring your purpose about.

I sent to Yarmouth, and they have promised also to Doctor Aleyn and John Russe to be [Burgesses] more then three week ago.

James Arblaster hath written a Letter to the Bailiff of Maldon, in Essex, to have you a Burgess there, how Jude shall speed, let him tell you, when ye speak together.

Sir, I have been twice at Framlingham, since your departing, but now the last time the Council was

there; I saw your Letter which was better than well endited . . . my words were well taken, but your Letter a thousand fold better; when they had read it, they showed it to my Lady; after that my Lady had seen it, I speak with my Lady, offering to my Lord and her your service, and besides that, ye to do my Lord a pleasure (*give a present*) and her a better, so as ye might depart without any sum specified; she would not tell in that matter, but remitted me again to the Council, for she said, and she spoke in it, till my Lord and the Council were agreed, they would lay the weight of all the matter on her, . . . then I went to the Council, and offered before them your service to my Lord, and to do him a pleasure, for the having again of your Place and Lands in Caister, 40*l.*, not speaking of your Stuff nor thing else; so they answered me your offer was more than reasonable, and if the matter were theirs, they said, they wist what Conscience would drive them to. They said they would move my Lord with it, and so they did; but then the Tempest arose, and he gave them such an answer, that none of them all would tell it me; but when I asked an answer of them they said; "And some Lords or greater men moved my Lord with it, the matter were yours";—(Keep counsel)—and with this answer I departed. . . .

If ye miss to be Burgess of Maldon, and my Lord Chamberlain will, ye may be in another place; there be a dozen Towns in England that choose no Burgess, which ought to do it, ye may be set in for one of those Towns, and ye be friended. Also in any wise forget not in all haste to get some goodly ring [at the] price of 20*s.* or some pretty Flower of the same price, and not under, to give to Jane Rodon; for she hath been the most special labourer in your matter, and hath promised her good will forth (*in future*); and she doth all with her Mistress. . . . I profered but 40*l.* and if my Lord Chamberlain profer my Lady the remanent, I can think it shall be taken; my Lady must have somewhat to buy her a Coverchief besides my Lord. . . .

I ask no more good of you for all the service, that I

shall do you while the world standeth, but a Goss Hawk,[1] if any of my Lord Chamberlain's men or yours go to Calais, or if any be to get in London, that is, a mewed Hawk, for she may make you sport when ye come into England a dozen years hence; and to call upon you hourly, nightly, daily, dinner, supper, for this Hawk, I pray no more but (*only*) my brother (*Edmund*), J. Pampyng, Thyrston, J. Myryel, W. Pitt, T. Platting, Jude, little Jack, Master Botoner and W. Wood to boot, to which Persons I pray you to recommend me, and if all these list to speak to you of this matter . . . (for all is little enough, and ye be not very well willing) I shall so purvey for them, and ever ye come to Norwich and they with you, that they shall have as dainty victuals and as great plenty thereof for 1*d.* as they shall have of the Treasurer of Calais for 15*d.* and ye peradventure, a Pye of Wymondham to boot; now think on me, good Lord, for if I have not an Hawk, I shall wax fat for default of Labour, and dead for default of company by my truth. No more but I pray God send you all your desires, and me my mewed Goss Hawk in haste, or rather then fail, a Soar Hawk, there is a Grosser dwelling right over against the Well with two Buckets (*an inn*) a little from Saint Helen's hath ever Hawks to sell.

Written at Norwich the 21st day of September, in the 12th year of Ed. IV.

JOHN PASTON.

Rather then fail a Tarssel proved will occupy the time till I come to Calais.

[1] A mewed Gosshawk was a large short-winged Hawk, that had changed her feathers once or more;—a Soar Hawk, was one who began to prey for himself;—a Tiercel Hawk, was the male of the Gosshawk kind—the female of all birds of prey is larger, stronger, and more courageous than the male—it appears too, that a Grosser, or Dealer in Foreign Fruits, &c., sold Hawks, being an importer of all kinds of luxuries. (F.)

199. The Chaplain Interfering (Sept., 1472)

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

[Abridged.]

. . . . I SEND you herewith the Indenture between you and Townshend [for a great mortgage]; my Mother hath heard of that matter, and taketh on marvellously, for she saith she weeteth well it shall never be pledged out; wherefore she saith that she will purvey for her land, that ye shall never sell of it, for she thinks ye would, and it came to your hands; as for her Will, and all such matters as were in hand at your last being here, they think that it shall not lie in all our powers to let it in one point.

Sir James [Gloys] is ever chopping at me, when my Mother is present, with such words as he thinks wrath me, and also cause my Mother to be displeased with me, even as who saith, he would I wist that he setteth not by the best of us; and when he hath most unfitting words to me, I smile a little, and tell him, "it is good hearing of these old tales."

Sir James is parson of Stokesby by J. Berney's gift; I trow he beareth him the higher.

Item, ye must send in haste to W. Barker a warrant to pay John Cook 30*s.*, and to the woman of Yarmouth, for oats, 20*s.*, and Sir John Styll[1] his money, for they all call daily upon it.

Item, I pray you send me some tidings how the world goeth, and whether ye have sent any of your folk to Calais: me thinks it costeth you too much money for to keep them all in London at your charge.

Item, whether ye have any thing spoken of my going to Calais.

Item, as for a Goshawk or a Tersel, I weened to have had one of yours in keeping long ere this time, but "far from eye far from heart"; by my troth I die for default of labour (*want of exercise*); and it may be by any mean possible, for God's sake let one be sent me in all

[1] The chaplain who had stood the siege in Caister.

haste, for if it be not had by Hallowmas, the season shall pass anon, memento mei, and in faith ye shall not lose on it, nor yet much win on it, by God, who preserve you. Written on Saint Michael's day in monte tomba (29 *Sept. Tombland in Norwich.*)

JOHN PASTON.

200. A RING AND A HAWK (Nov., 1472)

à Johan Paston Equ yer soit doné

[Abridged.]

WORSHIPFUL and well beloved Brother, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that I sent you a Letter, and a Ring with a Diamond; in which Letter ye might well conceive, what I would ye should do with the same Ring, with many other tidings and things which I prayed you to have done for me; which letter Botoner had the bearing of. It is so now that I understand that he is either dead,[1] or else hard escaped; whereof I am right heavy; and am not certain whether the said Letter and Ring came to your hands or not.

I would not that Letter were seen with some folks, wherefore I pray you take good heed, how that letter cometh to your hands, whole or broken, and in especial I pray you get it, if ye have it not . . . I sent you word of a Hawk, I heard not from you since, I do and shall do that is possible in such a need.

Also I cannot understand that my Lord of Norfolk shall come here this time, wherefore I am in a great agony, how is best for me to sue to him for rehaving of my place; that good Lord weet full little how much harm he doth me, and how little good or worship it doth him. I pray you send me your advice. No more to you this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Written at London the 4th day of November in the 12th year of Edward IVth.

I fear me that Idleness leadeth your rein; I pray

[1] He lived some years longer, and in spite of his fine words became almost the servant of John *the youngest*.

you rather remember Sir Hugh Lavernoys tyll your Hawk come.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

201. THE DISAPPOINTING HAWK (Nov., 1472)

To Master Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, thanking you most heartily of your diligence and cost which ye had in getting of the Hawk, which ye sent me, for well I wot your labour and trouble in that matter was as much as though she had been the best of the world, but so God help me, as forsooth as the most cunning falconers that ever I speak with can imagine, she shall never serve but to lay eggs, for she is both a muer-de-haye, and also she hath been so bruised with carnage of fowl, that she is as good as lame in both her legs, as every man may see at eye ; wherefore all such folk, as have seen her, advise me to cast her into some wood, whereas I will have her to eyer (*build*) ; but I will do therein as ye will ; whether ye will I send her you again, or cast her into Thorp wood, and a Tarsel with her ; for I weet where one is : but now I dare no more put you to the cost of an hawk ; but for God's sake, and there be any Tarsel, or good cheap Goshawk that might be gotten, that the bearer hereof may have her to bring me, and I ensure you, by my troth, ye shall have Dolly's and Brown's bond to pay you at Candlemas the price of the hawk ; now and (*if*) ye have as many ladies as ye were wont to have, I require you for her sake that ye best love of them all, once trouble yourself for me in this matter, and be out of my clamour.

Item, as for the ring, it is delivered ; but I had as great pain to make her [Jane Rodon] take it as ever I had in such a matter : but I have promised you to be her knight, and she hath promised me to be more at your commandment than at any knight's in England, my Lord reserved ; and that ye shall well

understand, if ye have ought to do, wherein she may be an helper, for there was never knight did so much cost on her as ye have done.

I marvel that I hear no word of the letters that my Lord Chamberlain [Hastings] should send to my Lord and my Lady for Caister: it is best that my Lord Chamberlain write to my Lady by some privy token betwixt them, and let a man of his come with the letters; my Lord Chamberlain may speed with my Lady what matters he will, saving the great matter; and ye inbill me for a solicitor, I shall be à votre commandement à toujours.

Item, methinketh that ye do evil that ye go not through with my Lady of Suffolk for Hellesdon and Drayton; for there should grow money to you, which would quit you against R. C. (*Richard Calle*), and set you before for ever.

I pray you for your ease, and all others to you ward, ply these matters; as for all other things, I shall send you an answer when I come to Norwich, which shall be on Thursday, with God's grace. I have tarried here at Framlingham this sev'night, for [my] Lady took not her chamber till yesterday. Adieu. Written on Saint Catherine's even (24 *Nov.*).

JOHN PASTON.

I saw the pie, and heard it speak; and by God it is not worth a crow; it is far worse than ye weened: by God it were shame to keep it in a cage.

202. MARGARET PASTON'S PRIVATE CHAPEL

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

[Abridged.]

SYM recommendeth him to your good mastership, and prayeth you that ye will not forget, though he be a boy, to let him wear the same livery that your men do; and if it pleased you to let his gown cloth be sent him home, that it might be made against your coming into this country, he would be as proud as any man ye have.

Sir, as heartily as I can I thank you for the hat, which is coming, as I understand by your writing sent by John the Abbot's man of Saint Benet's [At Holme].

My mother sends you God's blessing and her's, and prays you to get a new licence of my Lord of Norwich, that she may have the Sacrament in her Chapel: I got a licence of him for a year, and it is nigh worn out; ye may get it for the Bishop's life, an ye will. . . .

JOHN PASTON.

In another letter Margaret writes:—

And for the Licence that I speak to you, for to have the Sacrament in my Chapel, if ye cannot get it of the Bishop of Norwich, get it of the Bishop of Canterbury, for that is most sure for all places.

God keep you. Written on Midlent Sunday.

203. AN UNWILLING TAX-COLLECTOR (March, 1473)

To my Master Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered in haste.

AS I was writing this bill, Mistress Jane Harsset commanded me straitly that I should recommend her to you in her best wise, and she sendeth you word she would be as fain to hear from you as another poor body.

Sir, it is so that my cousin John Blennerhasset is informed that for very certain he is chosen to be one of the Collectors of the Task (*tax*) in Norfolk, whereas in very truth he hath not a foot of land within the shire; wherefore I beseech you, that as hastily as ye may, after the sight of this bill, that it may please you to take the labour to commune with Sir Richard Harcourt, and to let him have knowledge that this gentleman hath nought within the shire; and that ye twain may find the mean to get him out of that thankless office, for I promise you it encumbereth him evil, and my mistress his wife, and all us his friends here; and if so be that ye and Sir Richard Harcourt may not find the mean betwixt you, that then it may please you to move

my Lord Chamberlain with this matter, and so Master Harsset prayeth you, and Mistress Jane his wife also, for she liketh nothing by the office.

Item, it is thought here among us, that Heydons be the causers that he was set in: I pray you enquire of Sir Richard Harcourt who was the cause, and that it may be wist in the next bill that ye send me: for if they were the causers, it lieth in my cousin Harssett's power to quit them (*pay them out*).

We have no tidings to send, but that our Frenchmen [1] which kept our coasts here, are home into France, for lack of victuals, we say.

Hogan [2] is put into the Guildhall in Norwich, and shall be brought up to London for reporting of his old tales; he varyeth not. No more; but I pray God send you the Holy Ghost among you in the Parliament house, and rather the devil, we say, than ye should grant any more tasks. Written the day next after Our Lady day the Annunciation (25 *Mar.*), the 13th of Edward IV.

Young Heydon laboureth all that he can to marry one of his daughters to young John Berney by the mean of W. Calthorpe.

JOHN PASTON.

204. SIR JOHN GOING TO CALAIS (1473)

To John Paston, Esquire, in Norfolk.

WORSHIPFUL and right heartily beloved Brother, I recommend me unto you, letting you weet, that on Wednesday last past I wrote you a Letter, whereof John Carbalde had the bearing, promising me that ye should have it at Norwich this day, or else to-morrow in the morning; wherein I pray you to take a labour according after the tenure of the same, and that I may have an answer at London to Hoxon, if any messenger come, as [ever?] I may do for you.

As for tidings, there was a Truce taken at Brussels

[1] These were probably some French vessels that infested the coast. (F.)
[2] Hogan pretended to foretell commotions and rebellions, &c. (F.)

about the 26th day of March last past, between the Duke of Burgundy and the French King's Ambassadors, and Mr. William at Clyff for the King here; which is a Peace by land and water till the first day of April now next coming, between France and England, and also the Duke's land; God hold it for ever, and Grace be!

Item, the Earl of Oxford was Saturday at Dieppe, and is purposed into Scotland with a 12 Ships; I mistrust that work.

Item, there be in London many flying Tales, saying, that there should be a work (*rising*) and yet they wot not how.

Item, my Lord Chamberlain sendeth, now at this time to Calais, the young Lord Zouch and Sir Thomas Hungerford's Daughter and Heir, and some say, the young Lady Harrington, these be three great Jewels; Calais is a merry town, they shall dwell there I wot not while (*how long*).

No more, but I have been, and am troubled with mine over large and courteous dealing with my servants, and now with their unkindness; Platting your man would this day bid me farewell to to-morrow at Dover, notwithstanding Thyrston your other man is from me, and John Myryel, and W. Woode, which promised you and Dawbeney, God have his Soul, at Caister, that if ye would take him in to be again with me, and then he would never go from me; and thereupon I have kept him this three years to play Saint George and Robin Hood, and the Sheriff of Nottingham,[1] and now when I would have good horse, he is "gone into Bernysdale" and I without a [horse] Keeper.

Written at Canterbury, to Calais ward on Tuesday and hap be, upon Good Friday the 16th day of April, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

Your,

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

[1] G. takes this as a satirical description, *i.e.* "kicking his heels," but it seems as if Sir John patronised acting. The quotation is from a ballad of Robin Hood. Hastings married the heiress of Hungerford to his son.

Item, the most part of the Soldiers that went over with Sir Robert Green have leave, and be coming home the Highway full; my Carriage was behind me two hours longer than I looked after, but I wis I weened that I might have eaten my part on Good Friday, all my garees (*finery*) and pride had been gone, but all was safe (*thought he might have eaten, etc., thought there was nothing left*).

I pray you if W. Mylsent go from you, that he might come to me to Calais, I will have him.

205. Sir John's Servants will not go to Calais. Troubles expected (1473)

To John Paston, Esquire, be this delivered.

Right worshipful Brother, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that this day I was in very purpose to Calais ward, all ready to have gone to the Barge; save I tarried for a young man, that I thought to have had with me thither, one that was with Rows which is in the country; and because I could not get him, and that I have no more here with me but Pampyng, Edward, and Jack, therefore Pampyng remembered me, that at Calais he told me that he purposed to be with the Duchess of Norfolk, my Lady and yours; and Edward is sick, and seemeth not abiding, he would see what shall fall of this world, and so I am as he that saith; "come hither, John, my man"; And as hap was yesterday Juddy went afore to Calais ward, wherefore I am now ill purveyed; which for ought that I know yet, is like to keep me here this Whitsuntide, wherefore if ye know any likely men, and fair conditioned, and good Archers, send them to me, though it be four, and I will have them, and they shall have four Marks by the year, and my Livery. . . .

Item, I pray you send me a new Vestment of white Damask for a Deacon, which is amongst mine other Gear at Norwich, for he shall thereto as ye wot of; I will make an arming Doublet of it, though I should

another time give a long Gown of velvet for another vestment; and send it in all haste to Hoxon to send me.

I hoped to have been very merry at Calais this Whitsuntide, and am well apparelled and appointed, save that these folks fail me so, and I have matter there to make of right excellent. Some man would have hasted him to Calais, though he had no better errand, and some men think it wisdom and profit to be there now well out of the way.

Item, as for the Bishop [Waynflete] and I, we be nearer to a point than we were, so that my part is now all the Lands in Flegg wholly, the Manor of Hellesdon, Tolthorpe, and Tenements in Norwich and Earlham, except Fairchild's; but farewell Drayton, the Devil doytt (*pay*) them.

Item, large and fair communication hath been between Sir John Fagge and Richard Haulte for their Sister and me, before Doctor Wyntborne and elsewhere, so that I am in better hope than I was by St. Lawrence that I shall have a deliverance (*from his betrothal*).

Item, as for tidings here, I trow ye have heard your part, how that the Earl of Oxford landed by St. Osyth's in Essex, the 28th day of May, save he tarried not long; for if he had, the Earl of Essex rode to him wards, and the Lords Denham and Duras, and other more, which by likelihood should have distressed him; but yet his coming saved Hogan his head; and his Prophecy is the more believed; for he said, that this trouble should begin in May, and that the King should Northwards, and that the Scots should make us work, and him battle.

Men look after they wot not what, but men buy Harness fast; the King's menial men, and the Duke of Clarence's, are many in this town, the Lord Rivers came to day, men say, to purvey in likewise.

Item, how that the Countess of Warwick (*widow of the King-maker*) is now out of Beverley Sanctuary and Sir James Tyrell conveyeth her Northwards, men say, by the King's assent, whereto some men say, that the Duke of Clarence is not agreed.

Item, men say, that the Earl of Oxford is about the Isle of Thanet, hovering, some say, with great company, and some say, with few.

No more but God keep you. Written at London the 3rd day of June, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

The Bishop of Winchester was unravelling the complications of Fastolfe's will, furnishing funds for necessary fees and compensations, and in return securing an ample balance for his own College at Oxford (Magdalen). He had assigned a fair proportion to the Pastons, in 1468.

Sir John and Anne Haulte both repented of their betrothal and endeavoured to get the ecclesiastical authorities to cancel it, a difficult matter.

206. LORD HASTINGS THANKS SIR JOHN (Sept., 1473)

To my right heartily beloved friends and fellows, Sir John of Middelton and Sir John Paston, Knights.

AFTER hearty Recommendation, I thank you of the good attendance that ye gave unto the King's Counsel at Calais; and the good and effectual Devoirs, that ye put you in to assist my Deputy Sir John Scot, in all such things as might concern the safeguard of my charge there. Letting you weet, that if there be any thing that I can and may do for you, I shall with right good will perform it to my power. And I pray you to recommend me to my Lady Howard, my Lady Bourchier, and all other Ladies and Gentlewomen, of the said town. And in like wise to the Mayor, Lieutenant and Fellowship of the Staple; my fellows the Soldiers, and all other such as [to] you shall seem good. And our Lord send you your desires. Written at Nottingham, the 16th day of September. Sir John Paston I pray you to give credence to such things as my Deputy shall shew you from me, and conform you to the same.

Your Fellow,

HASTYNGS.

207. Clarence and Gloucester raise Suspicions. An Unpaid Legatee threatening (Nov., 1473)

To John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, be this delivered.

Worshipful and well beloved Brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet, that the World seemeth queasy (*unsettled*) here; for the most part that be about the King have sent hither for their Harness, and it [is] said for certain, that the Duke of Clarence maketh him big in that he can, shewing as he would but (*only*) deal with the Duke of Gloucester; but the King intendeth, in eschewing all Inconvenience, to be as big as they both, and to be a Stiffler atween them; and some men think, that under this, there should be some other thing intended, and some Treason conspired; so what shall fall, can I not say.

Item, it is said that yesterday two Passagers (*Passage Boats*) of Dover were taken; I fear that if Juddy had no hasty passage, so that if he passed not on Sunday or Monday, that he is taken, and some Gear of mine, I would not for 20*l.*

I hope and purpose to go to Calais ward on Sunday or Monday or nigh by, for I came not accompanied to do any service here; wherefore it were better for me to be out of sight.

(*Here follow some money transactions relative to Dr. Pykenham, Chancellor of Norwich, his Mother and others.*)

Item, Spring, that waited on my father when he was in Gaol house, whom my father, at his dying beset (*bequeathed*) 40*s.* he cryeth ever on me for it, and in way of Alms he would be eased, though it were but xxs. or xs. wherefore he hath written to my Mother, and must have an answer again; I would that my Mother send him, as though she lend him somewhat, and he will be pleased, and else he can say as shrewdly as any man in England.

Item, the King hath sent for his Great Seal; some say, we shall have a new Chancellor, but some think, that the King doth as he did at the last Fields (*fighting*),

he will have the Seal with him, but this day Doctor Morton, Master of the Rolls, rideth to the King, and beareth the Seals with him.

Item, I had never more need of money than now, wherefore Fastolf's 5 marks, and the money of Master John Smythe would make me whole, &c.

Written on St Leonard's day (6 *Nov.*), in the 13th year of the reign of Edward IVth.

Item, send me my vestments, according to the Letter I sent you by Symond Dam, in all haste.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

208. RELIEF ON GLOYS' DEATH. EXPENSE AT ROME (Nov., 1473)

To John Paston, Esq., be this delivered.

[Abridged.]

RIGHT worshipful and heartily beloved brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet that I received a letter that came from you, written circa viii Michælis (6 *October*), wherein ye let me weet of the decease of Sir James [Gloys] and that my mother is in purpose to be at Norwich, and I am right glad that she will now do somewhat by your advice, wherefore beware from henceforth that no such fellow creep in between her and you; and if ye list to take a little labour, ye may live right well, if she pleased: it is as good that ye ride with a couple of horses at her cost, as Sir James or Richard Calle. Ye send me word also, that she in no wise will purvey the 100*l.* for the redeeming of Sporle; let it go: as touching that matter, John Osbern told me that he communed with you at Sporle of that matter; farther, he devised that Cocket, or such another man should, to have it the better cheap, lay out the value of six years for to have it seven years, whereto I would agree; and for God's sake, if that may be brought about, let it be done: as ye wot of, it is let for 22*l.* by the year, yet the farmer grant but 21*l.*; but to Cocket it would be worth 25*l.*; yea, and better: nevertheless, if Cocket

will deliver six score pounds, I would he had it for seven years, with this, that my mother be agreeable to the same, because of the interest that she hath for my brother William, which shall not be of age this seven years; nevertheless, as ye know my old intent, I purpose to purvey for him in another place better than there; of which grant of my mother, I pray you to be my solicitor; in which, and it be brought about, Sporle shall be in as good case as ever he was.

John Osbern willed me to make you a sufficient warrant to sell and fell wood at Sporle, which I remember ye have in as ample form as can be: nevertheless, if this mean above written, of letting to farm, may be had, it shall, I hope, not need to fell nor sell much; but I remit that gear to your discretion: but if ye have such comfort, I pray you send me word.

I may say to you John Osbern flattered me, for he would have borrowed money of me. Item, in retailing of wood there, it were hard to trust him; he is needy. If Cocket, or whosoever had that manor to farm for seven years, and paid therefore but six score pounds, he should, to let it again, win 36*l.* which be much; wherefore if it might be, it were more reasonable six score and seven pounds to be received, and yet is there lost 29*l.* or else if ye take less money and fewer years, so it be after the rate, so there be paid 100*l.* at the least, send word.

Item, ye wrote that like a true man ye sent me 18*s.* by Richard Raddle; ye were too true: but he seems to be a false shrew, for he brought me none yet; whether he be out of town or not can I not say. Ye prayed me also to send you tidings how I sped in my matters, and in chief of Mistress Ann Hault: I have answer again from Rome, that there is the Well of Grace and salve sufficient for such a sore, and that I may be dispensed with: nevertheless my Proctor there asketh a 1000 ducats, as he deemeth; but Master Lacey, another Rome runner here, which knoweth my said Proctor there, as he saith, as well as Bernard knew his shield, saith that he meaneth but an 100 ducats, or 200 at the

most; wherefore after this cometh more: he wrote to me also, Quod Papa hoc facit hodiernis diebus multociens.

Item, as touching Caister, I trust to God that ye shall be in it to mine use, ere Christmas be past.

Item, your host Brigham recommends him to you, and when he and I reckoned, I gave him two nobles for your board, while ye were there in his absence; but in faith he would, for nought that I could do, take a penny; wherefore ye must thank him, or charge me to thank him on your behalf, in some next epistle that ye write to me to Calais: he let me weet that he would do more for you than so. . . .

As for other tidings, I trust to God that the two Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester shall be set at one by the award of the King.

Item, I hope by the means of the Duke of Gloucester, that my Lord Archbishop [of York] shall come home.

Item, as touching my sister Ann, I understand she hath been passing sick; but I weened that she had been wedded: as for Yelverton, he said but late, that he would have her if she had her money, and else not; wherefore methinketh that they be not very sure: but, among all other things, I pray you beware that the old love of Pampyng renew not; he is now from me: I wot not what he will do.

No more. Written at London the 22d day of November, the 13th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knt.

209. SIR JOHN'S REMINDERS (1473)

To John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful and well-beloved brother, I recommend me to you, letting you weet that I send you herewith one citation, wherein be my mother and ye, whereof I pray you that I may have hasty answer; the effect thereof is no more, but ye both must send answer, and make you a Proctor here; and that must come

hither under a Notary's sign, affirming that ye make such a man, Master John Halsnothe, or else, if ye will do the cost, to send some other hither; your Proctor to take administration, or to refuse; and what so he doth, ye to hold it for firm and stable: then must my mother and ye write a letter, under my mother's seal and your sign manual, to me and Master John Halsnothe, in this form.

"We greet you well, letting you weet that we have made you, Master John Halesnothe, our Proctor, in the Testament of John Paston, husband and father to you (*us, it should be*), wherein we will that on our behalf ye refuse the administration of the said Testament, and this writing is to you warrant and discharge, and also the very will of us."

This must we have for our discharge.

Item, I pray you take good heed to my sister Anne, lest the old love atween her and Pamping renew.

Item, I pray you send me word how my mother is disposed to her wards; and, if so were that a good marriage might be had, what she would depart with.

Item, I pray you that ye remember her for the tomb of my father at Bromholm, and also the chapel at Mauteby; and send me word how she is disposed herein.

Item, if I have Caister again, whether she will dwell there or not, and I will find her a priest towards at my charge, and give her the dove-house, and other commodities there; and if any horsekeeper of mine lie there, I will pay for his board also, as well as for the priest's.

Item, if my mother should have a new priest, I think that my brother Sir J. Goos were a meetly man to be there; he would also do as ye would have him, "now bear the cup even," as What-call-ye-him said to Aslake.

Beware of Minors (*friars*) from henceforth, and send me word how ye trust Doctor Pykenham: I would, if he would do aught for my mother, that he hasted the sooner to pay me the 100*l.* so that I might pledge out Sporle.

Item, as for other tidings, the Earl of Oxford is still besieged; nevertheless once he issued out, and took a gentleman, and has him within: but now of late he was busy, and one espied him, and shot at him, and struck him in the very face with an arrow. I saw this day the same man, and there I leave him.[1]

If Arblaster come to you, ye may see his letter sent to him by me, wherein I have written that he should take your advice; but I pray you, above all things, that me (*ye*) make haste, so that I hear from you again by this day sev'night. At London, the 25th day of November.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

210. SIR JOHN POLITE TO HIS MOTHER (Feb., 1474)

Mrs. Margaret Paston, at Norwich.

RIGHT honourable and most tender good Mother, I recommend me to you, beseeching you to have, as my trust is that I have, your daily Blessing; and thank you of your good Motherhood, kindness, cheer, charge, and costs, which I had, and put you to, at my last being with you, which God give me Grace hereafter to deserve!

Please it you to weet, that I think long that I hear not from you, or from Peacock your Servant, for the knowledge how he hath done in the sale of my farm barley (*paid as rent*), nor what is made thereof; wherefore I beseech you, if it be not answered by that time this bill cometh to you, to haste him and it hitherward; for if that had not tarried me, I deem I had been at Calais by this day; for it is so, as men say, that the French King with a great Host is at Amiens, but threescore miles from Calais; and if he, or his, rode before Calais, and I not there, I would be sorry.

[1] The Earl of Oxford fled abroad on Warwick's defeat in 1571, then took by surprise St. Michael's Mount, where, after a siege he surrendered. After his surrender, his Estates were confiscated, his Countess left destitute, and he was conveyed to the Castle of Hammes, near Calais, in Picardy, where he remained a Prisoner many years, namely, till 1484, 2 R. III. when he escaped, and joined the Earl of Richmond. (F.)

Item, men say, that the Earl of Oxford hath been constrained to sue for his Pardon only of his Life; and his Body, Goods, Lands, with all the remanent, at the King's Will, and so should in all haste now come in to the King; and some men say, that he is gone out of the Mount [St. Michael's], men wot not to what place, and yet left a great Garrison there, well furnished in victual, and all other thing.

Item, as for the having again of Caister, I trust to have good tidings thereof hastily.

Item, my Brother John fareth well, and hath done right diligently in my Cousin Elizabeth Berney's matter, whereof hastily I trust he shall send her tidings, that shall please her; and as to morrow he purposeth to take his Journey to Wales ward to the Lord Rivers.

No more at this time, but Jesu have you in his keeping.

Written at London the 20th day of February, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

Your Son,
J. PASTON, Knight.

211. SIR JOHN THE BETTER FOR GOING HOME. UNCLE WILLIAM'S PROFESSIONS (before November, 1474)

To Mistress Margaret Paston at Norwich, or to J. Paston in her absence.

RIGHT worshipful and my most kind and tender mother, I recommend me to you, thanking you of the great cost, and of the great cheer, that ye did to me at my last being with you; which cheer also had made me perfectly whole, I thank God and you; insomuch that, whereas I feared me that for weakness, and so green (*lately*) recovered of my sickness, that I should have apeyred (*grown worse*) by the way; but, God thank you, I took so my crumbs, while I was with you, that I feeled myself by the way that God and ye have made

me stronger than I weened that I had been, insomuch that I feel myself every day wholer than other.

It was so that I met with mine uncle William by the way, and there in the field (*open country*) paid him the 4*l.* which I had borrowed of him; and he was passing inquisitive how that I was purveyed for recompensing of Townshend: I told him I hoped well; and he told me that he understood that I had the 100*l.* of the Bishop's executors and he had heard say that I had also borrowed another 100*l.* of a merchant, and so I lacked but an 100 marks. I deem he heard this of T. Lovel, for I told him that I was in hope to find such a friend that would lend me an 100*l.* He asked me who was that? I answered him, an old merchant, a friend of mine; but mine uncle thought that should be by way of chevisance (*usury*), and to mine hurt; wherefore I was plain to him, and told him that ye were surety therefore, and purveyed it of such as would do for you; and as for the fourth hundred marks, he said to me that as for that he would, rather than jeopardy should be, purvey it by way of chevisance at London; insomuch that, ere he came from London, he had for my sake laid 500 marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) worth of plate with Hugh Fenn: the place at Warwick's inn is large, and my grandam is aged; it had been jeopardous to leave much plate with her, though half were her own: but, if I may do otherwise, I purpose not to chevise any money by his mean.

Item, I have delivered your bottle to Courby the carrier this same day, and he promised me to be with you on Monday night, or else on Tuesday timely; he hath also 40*d.* to pay for the third hired horse, and he bringeth the three horses with him, and is content (*paid*) for the labour, and for the meat largely: they be delivered him in as good, or rather better plight than when I had them forth, and not galled nor hurt; he hath also two saddles, one of my brother's, and another hired, as ye wot of.

Item, he hath a pair of boots of Edmund Reed's, the shoemaker, which Saunders borrowed of him: I beseech

you that William Millisent or Sym may see that every man have his own.

Item, as for my brother Edmund, blessed be God, he is well amended.

Item, as for Hankin our dog, I am afraid never to see him, but if your good help be.

Item, as for the books that were Sir James's, if it like you that I may have them, I am not able to buy them; but somewhat would I give, and the remanent, with a good devout heart, by my troth, I will pray for his soul; wherefore if it like you, by the next messenger or carrier, to send them in a day, I shall have them dressed (*set in order*) here; and if any of them be claimed hereafter, in faith I will restore it.

Written on Saturday.

JOHN PASTON, Kt.

212. DEBTS, BOOKS AND HEALTH (Nov., 1474)

To Mistress Margaret Paston, or to Roos dwelling before her gate at Norwich.

AFTER due recommendation, my most tender and kind mother, I beseech you of your daily blessing: please it you to weet that I received a letter that came from you, written the 26th of October, none erst, but on Wednesday last past; whereby I conceived that, at the writing of that letter, ye were not certain of the dealing between Townshend and me. It was so that, God thank you, I received the 20*l.* brought by Sym, and also the money brought by my brother; with which money, and with more that I had myself, I redeemed the manor of Sporle, and paid Townshend both the 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) therefore, and also 10*l.* that I owed him beside, and have of him an acquittance of all bargains of all other debts: nevertheless I assayed him, if he would, if need had been, have given me a twelve-month's longer respite, which he granted to do; but in conclusion I cannot entreat him, but that he will have the uttermost of his bargain, and this 20*l.* payable at Candlemas and

Easter: I can entreat him none otherwise as yet; wherefore I think, if I had passed my day, it had been hard to have trusted to his courtesy; insomuch I find him also right loose in the tongue: for Bekham, he speaketh nothing comfortably therein; what he will do, cannot I say.

Item, as for Caister, it needeth not to spur nor prick me to do ought therein; I do that I can with good will, and somewhat I hope to do hastily therein that shall do good.

Item, as for the books that were Sir James's, God have his soul! which it liketh you that I shall have them I beseech you that I may have them hither by the next messenger; and, if I be gone, yet that they be delivered to mine hostess at the George, at Paul's Wharf, which will keep them safe; and that it like you to write to me what my pain (*prayers*) or payment shall be for them.

Item, it liked you to weet of mine heal, I thank God that I am not greatly sick nor sore, but in my heel, wherein all men know not what pain I feel; and where ye advised me to hasten me out of this town, I would full fain be hence: I spend daily more than I should do if I were hence, and I am not well purveyed.

Item, blessed be God, my grandam is amended by such time as mine uncle William come hither; but my youngest cousin Margaret, his daughter, is dead and buried ere he come home.

I am as much afraid of this land that is in his hand, as I was of that that was in Townshend's hand.

I hope to write you more certainties within four or five days. No more, &c. Written the 20th day of November, in the 14th of Edward IV.

Your Son, JOHN PASTON, Kt.

213. At Calais: a Siege as a Show (Jan., 1475)

To the right worshipful John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, or To his Mother Margaret Paston, in his absence, in haste.

I RECOMMEND me to you, praying you heartily, that I may have weeting when that my Lord and Lady of Norfolk shall be at London, and how long they shall tarry there, and in especial my Lord of Norfolk; for upon their coming to London were it for me to be guided; . . . it is so that as to-morrow I purpose to ride into Flanders to purvey me of Horse and Harness, and per case (*perchance*) I shall see the Siege of Neuss ere I come again, if I have time; wherefore, if I so do, by likelihood it will be a 14 days ere I be here again; and after, as I hear from you and others thereupon, that at the next passage, and God will, I purpose to come to London ward: God send me good speed; in chief for the matter above written; and secondly, for to appoint with the King and my Lord, for such Retinue as I should have now in these wars into France; wherefore I pray you in Norfolk, and other places, commune with such as ye think likely for you and me, that are disposed to take wages in Gentlemen's Houses and elsewhere, so that we may be the more ready, when that need is; nevertheless at this hour, I would be glad to have with me daily three or four more than I have, such as were likely; for I lack of my Retinue, that I have here, so many.

I pray you send me some tidings, such as ye hear, and how that my brother Edmund doth; for as for tidings here, there be but few, save that the Siege lasteth still by the Duke of Burgundy afore Neuss, and the Emperor hath besieged also, not far from thence, a Castle, and another Town in like wise, wherein the Duke's men be.

And also, the French King, men say, is coming nigh to the water of Somme with 4000 Spears, and some men

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trow that he will, the day of breaking of Truce,[1] or else before, set upon the Duke's Countries here.

When I hear more, I shall send you more tidings.

The King's Ambassador Sir Thomas Montgomery and the Master of the Rolls be coming homeward from Neuss, and as for me, I think that I should be sick but if I see it.

Sir John of Parre and William Berkeley come this way to Flanders ward to buy them Horse and Harness (*suits of armour*), and [I] made Sir J. Parr [as] good cheer as I could for your sake; and he told me, that ye made him haulte (*high*) cheer, &c. at Norwich; no more. Written at Calais, the 17th day of January, in the 14th year of Edward IV.

214. Margaret Paston's Suspicions of Uncle William (Jan., 1474)

To John Paston, Esq. be this delivered in haste.

IHS

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that my cousin Robert Clere was here with me this week, and told me that he was not paid of the money, that ye know that was borrowed of his mother and of him, but fourscore pounds; the 20*l.* that my pledges lie for is unpaid: he said that he was desired to deliver my pledges, and to have been paid the 20*l.*; but he would not, till he had spoken with me, because of the promise that he had made to me before, that he should not deliver them to none without my assent. I said to him that I suppose verily that your brother is agreed with your uncle, that he should pay all the whole, for I suppose he hath a surety for all that and more; I would understand how it is, and how that my said cousin shall be content, for I were loath to lose my pledges; I wot it well your good uncle would be in

[1] The truce between Louis XI. and Charles the Bold came to an end in the summer of 1475. Sir J. Parr was father of Q. Catherine Parr.

possession with good will, but I would not so: I would that ye should speak with your uncle therein, and send me word in haste what he said.

I marvel, by my troth, that I had no writing from your brother, ere he departed from London, as he promised in the last letter that he sent to me, the which was written before the King's coming to Norwich; I weened verily to have heard from him at this time: I would ye should send him word of your uncle's dealing in this said matter, and send me an answer thereof.

Recommend me to your grandam; I would she were here in Norfolk, as well at ease as ever I saw her, and as little ruled by her son as ever she was; and then I would hope that we all should fare the better for her. It is told me that your uncle hath made great means and large proffers to John Bacton, to make a release to him of Oxnead; whether it be done or not, I wot not yet, but I shall wot in haste, if I may.

I would ye should speak with my Lord of Norwich, and assay to get a licence of him, that I may have the Sacrament here in the chapel, because it is far to the church, and I am sickly, and the parson is often out: for all manner of casualties of me and mine, I would have it granted, if I might.

Send me word if you hear any tidings from your brother, how he doth of his sickness, and in other things, as far forth as you know, as hastily as ye may. I think long till I hear from him, for divers causes. God keep you.

Written on haste at Mawteby, on the Saturday next before Candlemas day. Send me an answer of this letter in haste, and other tidings, &c.

My cousin Robert told me that there was more than 7*l.* of the money that was paid him that was right rusty (*bad*), and he could not have it changed: he was ungoodly served therein.

By your Mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

215. The King has drained Norfolk of Money (1475)

To Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered in haste.

Right well-beloved son, I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that I marvel that I have had no writing from you since ye sent me the letter that ye sent me before the King's coming to Norwich; in the which letter ye wrote to me that ye should have written again to me ere ye should depart out of London.

It is so that your uncle William hath do paid (*hath paid*) to my cousin Robert Clere but fourscore pounds of the 100*l.* and he will no more pay, but if (*unless*) he hath deliverance of my pledges, the which were laid to pledge for 20*l.* the which be better (*worth more*). I wot well, because of the good will that he oweth to me, as ye know, he would be in the possession thereof.

My cousin Robert Clere was here with me this week, and told me, that if he would have delivered them, he might have had the said 20*l.* but he said he would not, till he had spoken with me; by my troth I find him right kindly disposed to you, and to me both; and so I have desired him to keep still the pledges in his possession, till I have word from you how ye are agreed with your uncle for the payment of the said money: I ween verily that ye have found him surety for all, and if ye have so done, I would ye should write to your uncle therefore, that I might have my pledges again, for I were loath that they should come in his fingers.

Item, as for Sporle Wood, before the King's coming into Norfolk, I might have had Chapmen to have bought it a great (*wholly*) for twelve score marks (160*l.*), and now there will no man buy it a great because of the great good (*large sums*) that the people is laid to for the King; wherefore we are about to retail it as well as we may, and as well as it can be brought to; and send you word how we shall do, as hastily as I may.

As for your barley in this country, it cannot be sold above 10*d.* or 11*d.* [the comb] that is the greatest price of barley here, and but it be at a better price, I purpose for to do it malt; and as for money, I could not get yet of Peacock but 3*l.*; he saith that by then that the outcharges be borne, and the reparation of the mill at Winterton, we are like to have but little more money beside the barley. Malt is sold here but for 13*d.* and wheat 2*s.* or 26*d.* at this time, and oats 12*d.* There is none outload (*export*), suffered to go out of this country as yet; the King hath commanded that there should none go out of this land. I fear me that we shall have right a strange world; God amend it, when his will is.

I thank you for the flaggons that ye sent me; they be right good, and please me right well: I shall be as good an housewife for you as I can, and as I would be for myself. Send me word how ye do of your sickness that ye had on your eye and your leg; and if God will not suffer you to have health, thank him thereof, and take it patiently, and come home again to me, and we shall live together, as God will give us grace to do, and as I have said to you before this. I would ye were delivered of my Mistress A. H. (*Anne Haulte*), and then I would trust that ye should do the better.

As for the books that ye desired to have of Sir James's, the best of all and the fairest is claimed; nor it is not in his inventory, I shall assay to get it for you, and I may; the price of these other books, beside that, is 20*s.* and 6*d.* the which I send you a bill of. If ye like by the price of them, and ye will have them, send me word. And also I pray you send me an answer of this letter, because I think long since I heard from you. God have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich on the Saturday next before the Purification of Our Lady (2 Feb., Candlemas), the 14th year of King Edward the Fourth.

Your mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

216. The Same. Young Soldiers (1475)

Unto Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

[Abridged.]

RIGHT well-beloved son. . . . the King goeth so near us in this country, both to poor and rich, that I wot not how we shall live, but if the world amend: God amend it, when his will is. I can neither sell corn nor cattle to no good profit. . . .

William Peacock shall send you a bill what he hath paid for you for two tasks (*subsidies*) at this time; and how he hath purveyed for the remanent of your corn; and also of other things that be necessary, that should be purveyed for in your absence. Send me word also whom ye will desire to do for you in this country, or elsewhere in your absence; and write to them to do for you, and they will be the better willed to do for you; and I will do my endeavour for you also, as well as I can.

The sum of money that I have received of William Peacock:

First, 40*s.* of Runham. Item, of Bastwick, 20*s.* Item, of Runham, 20*s.* Item, of him for barley at Runham, 20*s.* Item, of the fishing at Bastwick, 13*s.* 4*d.* Item, for barley sold at Runham, 8*s.* Sum total, 6*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.*

Item, I have received of Richard Call, of Sporle woods, 26*s.* 8*d.* and more shall I hope for hereafter within short time; as I receive for you, I hope to give you a true account: and this is all that I have received for you yet, since ye departed hence.

God bring you well again to this country, to his pleasance, and to your worship and profit. Written at Maulteby, the 23d day of May, and the Tuesday next after Trinity Sunday.

For God's love, and your brethen go over the sea, advise them as ye think best for their safeguard, for some of them be but young soldiers, and wot full little what it meaneth to be as a soldier, nor for to endure to do as a soldier should do. God save you all, and send

me good tidings of you all. And send ye me word in haste how ye do, for I think long till I hear from you.

By your mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

Item, I would not in no wise that ye should sell nor set to pledge that ye have in Runham, whatsoever fortune of the remanent; for it is a pretty thing, and reasonable well paid, and near this town: I would be right sorry that ye should forbear that: I had lever ye forbore that your uncle hath to mortgage than that.

217. JOHN THE YOUNGEST WANTS A HORSE (Easter, 1475)

To my right worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston, at Mawteby.

RIGHT worshipful mother, after all humble recommendations, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing. Please it you to weet that late yesternight I came to Norwich, purposing to have been as this day with you at Mawteby, but it is so that I may not hold my purpose, for he, that shall pay me my quarter wages for me and my retinue, is in Norwich, and waiteth hourly when his money shall come to him; it is one Edmund Bowen of the Exchequer, a special friend of mine, and he adviseth me to tarry till the money be come, lest that I be unpaid, "for who cometh first to the mill, first must grind."[1]

And as I was writing this bill, one of the Grooms of my Lord's Chamber came to me, and told me, that my Lady will be here in Norwich to-morrow at night towards Walsingham (*on pilgrimage*), which shall, I wot well, be another let to me, but I had more need to be otherwise occupied than to await on Ladies, for there is as yet I trow no Spear that shall go over the sea, so evil horsed as I am, but it is told me that Richard Call hath a good horse to sell, and one John Butcher of Oxborough

[1] . . . those who had engaged in the King's service received their pay out of the Exchequer quarterly, for themselves and their waged men. (F.)

hath another, and if it might please you to give Sym leave to ride into that country at my cost, and in your name, saying that ye will give one of your sons an horse, desiring him that he will give you a pennyworth for a penny; and he shall, and the price be reasonable, hold him pleased with your payment out of my purse, though he know it not ere his horse depart from his hands. Mother I beseech you, and it may please you to give Sym leave to ride on this message in your name, that he may be here with me to-morrow in the morning betimes, for were I once horsed, I trow I were as far forth ready as some of my neighbours.

I heard a little word that ye purposed to be here in Norwich the next week, I pray God it be this week.

Mother, I beseech you that I may have an answer to-morrow at the farthest of this matter, and of any other service that it please you to command me, which I will at all seasons [be] ready to accomplish with God's grace, whom I beseech to preserve you and yours.

Written at Norwich, this Wednesday in Easter week.

By your Son and Servant

JOHN PASTON.

218. THE KING AND THE DUKE OF NORFOLK. KEEPING WARM (Oct., 1475)

To the Right Worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight, lodged at the George, by Paul's Wharf, in London.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, certifying you that I have communed with Barnard, and other your well-willers with my Lord of Norfolk, which advise me that ye should, for your nighest mean to get Caister again, labour to get a letter from the King, directed to Richard Southwell, James Hobart, and other of my Lord's counsel being, and to each of them; and in the said letter to let them have knowledge, that the King moved to my Lord of Norfolk the said matter beyond the sea, and how my Lord answered the King, that at his coming into England he would move to his said

counsel of the said matter, and give the King an answer; wherefore the King in the said letter must straitly charge them, and each of them to commune with my Lord in the said matter, in such wise that the King may be certified of an answer from my Lord and them at the farthest by crastino Animarum (*3rd Nov.*), for Southwell nor James Hobart shall not be at London before Hallowmas; and this is the best way that ye may take, as we think here.

My Lady sweareth, and so doth Barnard on her behalf, that she would as fain ye had it as any body; notwithstanding she said not so to me, since I came home, for I spake not with her but once, since I saw you last; yet she lieth in Norwich, and shall do, till she be delivered: but I have been sick, ever since I came on this side the sea, but I trust hastily to amend, for all my sickness that I had at Calais, and since I came over also, came but of cold; but I was never so well armed for the war as I have now armed me for cold; wherefore I advise you to take example by me, if it happen you to be sick, as ye were when I was at Calais, in any wise keep you warm. I ween Harry Wodehouse, nor James Arblaster, wear never at once so many coats, hose, and boots as I do, or else by God we had gone (*perished*) therefore; what we shall yet I cannot say, but I bear me bold on two days amending.

My mother sendeth you God's blessing and her's, and she would fain have you at home with her; and if ye be once met, she telleth me, ye shall not lightly depart, till death depart you.

As I was writing this letter, one told me that the King should be at Walsingham this next [week]; if it be so, it were best for you to await on the King all the way; and if ye have not men and horse enough, I shall send you. Do as ye think best: and as ye will have me do, send me your advice, and I shall accomplish it to my power with God's grace, who preserve you.

Written at Norwich, the 10th day of October, in the fifteenth year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON.

219. The King and the Duke. Oats for a Hat (Oct., 1475)

To Sir John Paston, Knight, lodging at the George, by Paul's Wharff, in London.

After all duties of recommendation, please it you to understand, that I have spoken with my Lady since I wrote to you last; and she told me that the King had no such words to my Lord for Caister, as ye told me; but she saith, that the King asked my Lord at his departing from Calais, how he would deal with Caister, and my Lord answered never a word.

Sir W. Brandon stood by, and the King asked him, what my Lord would do in that matter; saying, that he had commanded him before time to move my Lord with that matter, and Sir W. Brandon gave the King to answer, that he had done so; then the King asked Sir W. B. what my Lord's answer was to him, and Sir W. B. told the King, that my Lord's answer was, that the King should as soon have his life as that place; and then the King asked my Lord, whether he said so or not, and my Lord said, yea. And the King said not one word again, but turned his back, and went his way; but my Lady told me, and the King had spoken any word in the world after that to my Lord, my Lord would not have said him nay.

And I have given my Lady warning that I will do my Lord no more service; but ere we parted, she made me to make her promise, that I should let her have knowledge ere I fastened myself in any other service; and so I departed, and see her not since, nor not purpose to do, till I speak with you.

I pray you bring home some Hats with you, or, and ye come not hastily, send me one, &c. and I shall pay you for it a Comb [of] Oats,[1] when ye come home.

My Mother would fain have you at Mawtby, she

[1] In 1475 a Comb of Oats sold for 11*d.*, we have therefore the value of a Hat in this reign. (F.)

rode thither, out of Norwich on Saturday last past, to purvey your lodging ready against your coming.

I have been right sick again since I wrote to you last, and this same day have I been passing sick; it will not out of my stomach by no mean, I am undone, I may not eat half enough when I have most hunger, I am so well dieted, and yet it will not be. God send you hele for I have none three days together, do the best I can.

Written at Norwich, the Monday next before Saint Simon and Jude (28 Oct.), in the 15th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON.

220. DEATH OF THE DUKE OF NORFOLK. CLOTH OF GOLD (Jan., 1476)

This Letter has no Direction, but it is written either To John Paston, Esquire, or Margaret Paston.

LIKE it you to weet, that not in the most happy season for me, it is so fortuned, that whereas my Lord of Norfolk,[1] yesterday being in good health, this night died about midnight, wherefore it is for all that loved him to do and help now that, that may be to his honour, and weal to his Soul; and it is so, that this Country is not well purveyed of Cloth of Gold for the covering for his Body and Herse; wherefore every man helping to his power, I put the Council of my Lord in comfort, that I hoped to get one for that day, if it were so that it be not broken, or put to other use; wherefore please it you to send me word if it be so, that ye have, or can come by the Cloth of Tissue, that I bought for our Father's Tomb, and I undertake it shall be saved again for you unhurt

[1] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, &c., was retained by Edward IV. to serve him in his wars in France, in 1473; he married Elizabeth, Daughter of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, and died suddenly at his Castle of Framlingham, on the 17th of January, 1475, 15 E. IV. and was buried in the Abbey Church of Thetford, in Norfolk.

He left an only Daughter and Heir, Anne, married in her early age to Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, who dying without issue, the great Possessions and Honours of this noble Family came to Sir John Howard, Knight, Lord Howard, whose mother was a Sister and Coheir of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. (F.)

at my peril; I deem hereby to get great thanks, and great assistance in time to come; and that either Sym or Mother Brown may deliver it me to-morrow by seven of the clock.

Item, as for other means, I have sent my servant Richard Toring to London, which I hope shall bring me good tidings again, and within four days I hope to see you.

Written on Wednesday the 17th day of January, in the 15th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

221. SIR JOHN HAS TAKEN POSSESSION OF CAISTER (Jan., 1476)

To Sir John Paston, Knight, at the George at Paul's Wharf.

AFTER all duties of recommendation, liketh it you to weet, that I ensure you your sending to Caister is evil taken among my Lord's folks, insomuch that some say that ye tendered little my Lord's death, in as much as ye would so soon enter upon him after his decease, without advice and assent of my Lord's counsel; wherefore it is thought here by such as be your friends in my Lord's house, that if my Lady have once the grant of the wardship of the child, that she will occupy Caister with other lands, and lay the default on your unkind hastiness of entry without her assent; wherefore in any wise get you a patent of the King ensealed before her's, and ye may, by any mean possible. Also I pray you commune with my Lord Chamberlain for me, and weet how that he will have me demeaned. It is told me for certain that there is none hay to get at Calais, wherefore if I might be pardoned for any keeping of horse at Calais till Midsummer, if it were a good turn.

The bearer hereof shall come home again from London, within a day after that he cometh thither, if ye will aught command him. I pray you send me word by him how ye do with your matters, and I pray you in

any wise let me understand, by the bearer hereof, how Bowen of the Exchequer will deal with me: six-score and ten pounds it is now; and I would have seven score and ten pounds, and I to pledge it out in four or five years, or else to forfeit the manor [of Swainsthorpe]. Written at Norwich, the Tuesday next after your departing thence, the 23d day of January, in the fifteenth year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON.

222. SIR JOHN JUSTIFIES HIMSELF (Jan., 1476)

To John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, be this delivered.

[Abridged.]

I RECOMMEND me to you. . . .

Item, I have received a letter from you written on Tuesday last.

Item, where that some towards my Lady of Norfolk noise that I did unkindly to send so hastily to Caister as I did; there is no discreet person that so thinketh; for if my Lord had been as kind to me as he might have been, and according to such heart and service as my Grandfather, my Father, yourself, and I, have owed and done to my Lords of Norfolk that dead been, and yet (*even*) if I had wedded his Daughter, yet must I have done as I did; and moreover, if I had had any deeming of my Lord's death four hours ere he died, I must needs, but if I would be known a Fool, have entered it the hour before his decease; but in effect, they that in that matter have always meant unkindly to me, they feign that Rumour against me; but there is none that meant truly to him that dead is, that would be sorry that I had it, and in especial such as love his Soul.

Item, where it is deemed that my Lady would hereafter be the rather mine heavy (*unkind*) Lady for that dealing, I think that she is too reasonable so to be, for I did it not unwist to her Council; there was no man thought that I should do otherwise, and as to say, that

I might have had my Lady's advice and leave, I might have tarried yet, ere I could have spoken with her, or yet have had any body to have moved her on my behalf. . . . It was this day before all the Lords of the Council, and among them all, it was not thought, that in my sending of Wheatley thither, immediately after the decease of the Duke, that I dealt unkindly or unfittingly, but that I was more unreasonably dealt with; wherefore, let men deem what they will, greatest Clerks are not always wisest men; but I hope hastily to have one way in it or other.

Item, I weened to have found a Gown of mine here, but it come home the same day that I come out, brought by Harry Berker Loader (*carrier*). I would in all haste possible have that same Gown of puke furred with white Lamb. . . .

Extract from a letter 5 *months later:*—

Item, blessed be God, I have Caister at my will; God hold it better than it [was] done heretofore. No more, but written the next day after Saint Peter (29 *June*) in the 16th of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Kt.

On the back of the Letter, in an ancient hand, is written, "Caister is gotten agayn."

The recovery of Caister had been the great object of the Pastons ever since the Duke of Norfolk had obliged them, by a regular siege, to surrender it to him in 1469. (F.)

223. A KITCHEN-CLERK FOR LORD HASTINGS (March, 1476).

To my Lord Hastyngs.

[Abridged.]

MY most redoubted and singular good Lord, after most humble and due recommendation, please it your good Lordship to have knowledge, that according to your commandment, in my way homeward, I remembered me of a person, which to my thinking is meet to be clerk of your kitchen; which person is now

in service with Master Fitzwalter, and was before that with Whethill at Guisnes, and purveyor for his house, and at such time as the King's grace was there last, in his voyage towards France. This man is mean (*moderate*) of stature, young enough, well witted, well mannered; a goodly young man on horse and foot; he is well spoken in English, meetly well in French, and very perfect in Flemish; he can write and read; his name is Richard Stratton; his mother is Mistress Grame of Calais; and when I had showed him mine intent, he was agreeable and very glad, if that it might please your Lordship to accept him into your service: whereto I promised him my poor help, as far forth as I durst move your good Lordship for him, trusting that I should have knowledge of your pleasure herein, ere I departed towards your Lordship out of this country, wherefore I advised him to be ready within fourteen days of March at the farthest; that if it pleased your Lordship to accept him, or to have a sight of him before your departing to Calais, that there should be no sloth in him.

He desired me to move Master Fitzwalter to be good master to him in this behalf, and so I did, and he was very glad and agreeable thereto, saying if his son had been of age, and all the servants he hath might be in any wise acceptable to your Lordship, that they all and himself in like wise, shall be at your commandment, while he liveth.

And at my coming home to my poor house, I sent for Robert Bernard, and showed unto him that I had moved your Lordship for him; and he in like form is agreeable to be ready, by the 14th day of March, to await on your Lordship, be it to Calais or elsewhere, and from that day so forth for ever, while his life will last, without grudging or contrarying your commandment and pleasure, in any wise that is in him possible to accomplish. . . .

My Lord, I trust that your Lordship shall like both their persons and their conditions; and as for their truth, if it may please your good Lordship to accept my poor word with their's, I will depose largely for that;

and as it pleaseth your good Lordship to command me in these matters, and all other, if it may please your Lordship to show the same to my brother Nessfield, he knoweth who shall soonest be with me to put me in knowledge of your pleasure, which I shall be at all seasons ready to accomplish to my poor power with God's grace, whom I beseech long to continue the prosperous estate of your good Lordship.

From Norwich, the second day of March, with the hand of your most humble servant and beadsman,

JOHN PASTON.

THE SWISS DEFEAT CHARLES THE BOLD AT GRANSON (1476)

To Mrs. Margaret Paston, at Norwich, to her son John Paston, Esquire, and to each of them.

I RECOMMEND me to you, like it you to weet, that I am not certain yet whether my Lord [Hastings] and I shall come into England the week before Easter, or else the week after Easter; wherefore Mother, I beseech you to take no displeasure with me for my long tarrying, for I must do none otherwise for displeasing of my Lord.

I was nothing glad of this journey, if I might goodly have chosen; nevertheless saving that ye have cause to be displeased with me for the matter of Koketts, I am else right glad, for I hope that I am far more in favour with my Lord than I was tofore.

Item, I send you, Brother John, a Letter herewith, which was brought hither to Calais, from the George at Paul's Wharf; I deem it cometh from my brother Walter.

Item, if ye intend hitherwards, it were well done that ye hied you, for I suppose that my Lord will take the view of all his Retinue here, now before his departing; and I think that he would be better content with your coming now, than another time; do as ye think best, and as ye may.

Item, where[as] Master Fytzwalter made me to

write to you to advise you to tarry, I remit that to your discretion.

As for tidings here, we hear from all the world, first, the Lord Rivers was at Rome right well and honourably, and other Lords of England, as the Lord Ormond, the Lord Scrope, and at their departing twelve miles on this half Rome, the Lord Rivers was robbed of all his Jewels and Plate, which was worth 1000 Marks or better, and is returned to Rome for a Remedy.

Item, the Duke of Burgundy hath conquered Lorrain and Queen Margaret shall not now by likelihood have it; wherefore the French King cherisheth her but easily (*neglectfully*); but after this conquest of Lorrain, the Duke took great courage to go upon the Land of the Swiss to conquer them, but they bearded (*faced*) him at an onset place, and hath distressed him, and hath slain the most part of his Vanward, and won all his Ordnance and Artillery, and moreover all Stuff that he had in his Host; except men and horse that fled not, but they rode that night twenty miles; and so the rich Salets, Helmets, Garters, Nowches gilt, and all, is gone, with Tents, Pavillions and all, and so men deem his pride is abated; men told him, that they were froward Carles, but he would not believe it, and yet men say, that he will to them again, God speed them both.

Item, Sir John Myddleton took leave of the Duke to sport him, but he is set in prison at Brussels.

I pray you send me some word, if ye think likely that I may enter Caister when I will, by the next Messenger.

Written at Calais, in reasonable health of body and soul, I thank God, the 21st day of March, in the sixteenth year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

During the preceding Autumn, the Duke of Burgundy having subdued the whole Duchy of Lorrain, he now attacked the Swiss, and took a town called Granson, just as a body of troops were arriving to its relief; these he went to meet, as they came down the narrow passes of the Mountains; when his Army, being seized with a panick, fled, and left his baggage to be plundered by the Enemy.

Within a short time after this he besieged Morat, a small town near Bern, when a battle ensued, in which he was totally routed. (F.)

225. The Death of Charles the Bold affects Politics (1477)

To John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, in haste.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet, that yesterday began the great Council, to which all the Estates of the Land shall come to, but if (*unless*) it be for great and reasonable excuses; and I suppose the chief cause of this Assembly is, to commune what is best to do, now upon the great change by the Death of the Duke of Burgundy, and for the keeping of Calais, and the Marches, and for the preservation of the Amities taken lately, as well with France as now with the Members of Flanders; whereto I doubt not there shall be in all haste both the Dukes of Clarence, and Gloucester, whereof I would that my brother Edmund wist.

Item, I feel but little effect in the labour of W. Alyngton, nevertheless I deem it (*a marriage*) is not for you, she shall not pass 200 Marks, as far as I can understand apart.

Item, I will not forget you otherwise.

It is so that this day I hear great likelihood, that my Lord Hastyngs shall hastily go to Calais with great Company; if I think it be for you to be one, I shall not forget you.

Item, this day the matter between Mrs. Anne Haulte and me hath been sore broken both to the Cardinal [Bourchier], to my Lord Chamberlain, and to myself, and I am in good hope; when I hear and know more, I shall send you word.

It seemeth that the World is all quavering, it will reboil somewhere, so that I deem young men shall be cherished, take your heart to you, I fear that I cannot be excused, but that I shall forth with my Lord Hastings over the Sea, but I shall send you word in haste, and if I go, I hope not to tarry long.

Item, to my brother Edmund.

I am like to speak with Mistress Dixon in haste,

and some deem that there shall be condescended, that if E. P. (*Edmund Paston*) come to London that his costs shall be paid for.

I shall hastily send you word of more things.

Written at London, the 14th day of February, in the 16th year of Edward IV. the Friday afore Fastingong (*Lent*).

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

The Politicians of these times, we here see, looked upon the Death of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, as an Event of great importance to all Europe. He was dismounted from his horse and slain in a battle fought on the 5th of January, 1477, before Nancy, the capital City of Lorrain, between his forces and those of René, Duke of Lorrain. (F.)

226. A FASHIONABLE HORSE (1477)

To Master Sir John Paston, be this letter delivered in Calais.

[Abridged.]

HONOUR and Joy be to you, my right good Master, and most assured Brother, letting you know that all your Wellwillers and Servants, in these parts, that I know, fare well, and better would, if they might hear of your well being, and forthwith some of your French and Burgundy tidings; for we in these parts be in great dread lest the French King with some assaults, should in any wise disturb you of your soft, sote (*sweet*), and sure, sleeps, but as yet we nothing can hear that he so disposeth him. . . .

Sir, farthermore I beseech you, as ye will do any thing for me, that ye see one day for my sake, and for your own pleasure, all the good Horse in Calais, and if there be amongst them any prick horse of deeds (*trained in the paces, fashionable*), that is to sell, in especial that he be well trotting of his own courage, without force of Spurs, and also a stirring horse, if he be, he is the better; I pray you send me word of his colour, deeds, and courage, and also of his price, feigning as ye would buy

him yourself, and also I would have him somewhat large, not with the largest; but no small horse, as more than a double horse; praying you above all things to have this in remembrance, and that hastily as may be, for there is late promised me help to such an intent, and I wote not how long it shall endure; and therefore I beseech you send me word by time.

I trow the French men have taken up all the good horse in Picardy, and also they be wont to be heavy horse in labour, and that I love not, but a heavy horse of flesh, and light of courage I love well, for I love no horse that will always be lean and slender like Greyhounds. God keep you.

Your,

JOHN PYMPE.

227. MASTER PYMPE DISAPPOINTED

To Master Sir John Paston, Knight, be this Letter delivered at Calais.

FRESH amorous Sights of Countries far and strange
Have all fordone your old affection;
In Pleasures new, your heart doth skirre and range
So high and far; that like as the Falcon
Which is aloft, telleth scorn to look a down
On him that wont was her Feathers to pick and imp;
Right so forgotten ye have your poor Pympe.

That writeth, sendeth, and wisheth all day your weal
More than his own; but ye nor hear, nor see,
Nor say, nor send, and ever I write and seal
In prose and rhyme, as well as it will be;
Some evil tongue I trow mis-faith of me
And else your fast and faithful friendliness
Ye think mis-spent on such as I, I guess.

. . . (3 *verses*) . .

. . . . . .

For Master Paston the thing whereon my bliss
Was wholly set, is all fordone I wis.

By your JOHN PYMPE,

this being the 6th Letter that I have sent you.

Always praying you to remember the Horse that I have in every Letter written for; as thus, that it would please you to understand who has the gentlest horse in trotting and stirring that is in Calais, and if he be to sell, to send me word of his price, largeness, and colour.

It is told me, that the Master Porter hath a courageous roaned horse, and that he would put him away because he is dangerous in company, and of that I force not, so that he be not churlish at a spur, as plunging; and also I set not by him, but if he trot some what high and genteely. No more, but God keep you.

228. News from Calais: Louis XI. attacking Flanders: Mary of Burgundy marrying Maximilian (Aug., 1477)

Unto the Right Worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight.

[Abridged.]

Master Paston, after all due recommendation, and hearty desire to hear of your good Hele, please it you to weet. . . . As for tidings in these parts, the French King lieth at siege at St. Omers, on the one side of the Town a mile off, but he hath no great Ordnance there; and they of the town skirmish with them every day, and keep a passage half a mile without the town; and the French King hath brenned all the Towns, and fair Abbeys, that were that way about St. Omers, and also the Corns which are there,

And also, as it is said for certain, the French King hath brenned Cassell, that is my old Lady of Burgundy's Jointure (*Margaret, sister of Edward IV.*), and all the Country thereabout, whereby she hath lost a great part of her livelihood; and that is a shrewd (*evil*) token that he meaneth well to the King our Sovereign Lord, when he intendeth to destroy her.

Moreover Sir Philip de Crevecœur hath taken them that were in Fynes within this four days to the number of 14 persons, and the remanent were fled, and he had

them to the French King, and he hath brent all the place, and pulled down the Tower, and a part of the wall, and destroyed it.

And as it is said, if the French King cannot get St. Omers, that he intendeth to bring his Army through these Marches into Flanders, wherefore my Lord hath do broken (*caused to be broken*) all the passages, except Newham Bridge, which is watched, and the Turnpike shut every night.

And the said French King within these three days railed greatly of my Lord to Tyger Poursuivant, openly before two hundred of his Folks; wherefore it is thought here, that he would feign a quarrel to set upon this town, if he might get advantage.

And as I understand, the Emperor's Son is married at Ghent as this day; and there came with him but four Hundred Horse, and I can hear of no more that be coming in certain; and in money he brought with him an hundred thousand Ducats,[1] which is but a small thing in regard for that he hath to do; wherefore I fear me sore, that Flanders will be lost; and if St. Omers be won, all is gone in my conceit; nevertheless they say there should come great power after the Emperor's Son,[2] but I believe it not, because they have been so long of coming.

And I pray you to recommend me unto Sir Terry Robsart, and that it please you to let him know of your tidings, and our Lord have you in his keeping.

At Calais, the Sunday next after the Assumption.

Your,

EDMUND BEDYNGFELD.

[1] A Ducat of gold is worth about 10*s*.—of Silver, nearly 5*s*. (F.)

[2] Maximilian, Son of the Emperor Frederick III. married Mary, Daughter and Heir of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy.—She was the richest Heiress of her time, and had been promised by her Father to many Princes, and amongst the number to this Prince, whom she now chose for herself.—She was about 19 years of age at the time of her marriage, in August 1477, and lived only 5 or 6 years after it. (F.)

229. Margaret Paston angry (1477)

The Copy of a Letter to Sir John Paston, Knt. from his Mother.

It is so that I understand by your letter, written the Thursday next before Saint Laurence, that ye would have knowledge how that I would be demeaned in Kocket's matter, which I send you hereunder written: I put you in certain that I will never pay him [a] penny of that duty that is owing to him, though he sue me for it, not of mine own purse; for I will not be compelled to pay your debts against my will, and though I would, I may not: wherefore I advise you to see me saved harmless against him for your own advantage in time coming; for, if I pay it, at long way ye shall bear the loss. And whereas ye write to me that I gave you 20*l.* and promised other 20*l.* that is not so, for I wot well if I had so done, ye would not [have] assigned me by your letters of your own hand writing, the which I have to shew, that I should receive again the same sum of William Peacock, and of your farmers, and buyers of your wood of Sporle; and take this for a full conclusion in this matter, for it shall be none otherwise for me than I write here to you.

I marvel much that ye have dealt again so simply with Sporle, considering that ye and your friends had so much to do for to get it you again once, and ye having no greater matters of charge than ye have had since it was last pledged out, it causeth me to be in great doubt of you, what your disposition will be hereafter for such livelihood as I have been disposed, before this time, to leave you after my decease; for I think verily that ye will be disposed hereafter to sell or set to mortgage the land, that ye should have after me your mother, as gladly and rather than that livelihood that ye have after your father; it grieveth me to think upon your guiding, after the great good (*property*) that ye had in your rule, since your father died, whom God assoil, and so simply spent as it hath been; God give you grace to

be of sad (*serious*) and good disposition hereafter to his pleasance and comfort to me, and to all your friends, and to your worship and profit hereafter.

And as for your brother William, I would ye should purvey for his finding, for as I told you the last time ye were at home, I would no longer find him at my cost and charge; his board and his school hire is owing since Saint Thomas's day afore Christmas; and he hath great need of gowns, and other gear, that were necessary for him to have in haste. I would ye should remember it, and purvey them, for as for me I will not. I think ye set but little by my blessing, and if ye did ye would have desired it in your writing to me: God make you a good man to his pleasance.

Written at Maultby the day after Saint Laurence (2nd Feb.), the year of the reign of King Edward IV., the 17th year.

your Mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

230. SELLING THE CLOTH OF GOLD (1478)

To my right worshipful Mother Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it you to weet, that whereas I intended to have been at home this Midsummer, and purposed with your good help to have begun upon my Father's Tomb, so that it might have been ended this Summer; it is so, that for such causes as are now begun between my Lord of Suffolk and me, for the Manors of Heylesdon, Drayton, &c. for which matters I must needs be here this next term; therefore I deem it would be after Midsummer, ere than I can see you.

Please it you also to weet that I communed with Master Pykenham to weet if he would buy the Cloth of Gold for so much as he desired once to have bought it, and he offered me once 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*); therefore, nevertheless it cost me 24*l.* yet now, when I speak to him thereof, he refused to buy it; and said, that he had now so many charges that he may not.

But it is so that the King doth make certain Copes and Vestments of like Cloth, which he intendeth to give to the College of Fotheringhay, where my Lord his Father is now buried, and he buyeth at a great price ; I communed with the vestment maker for to help me forth with 12 yards, and he hath granted to do, as Wheatley can tell you ; wherefore, if it please you that it be bestowed for to make a Tomb for my father at Bromholm, if ye like to send it hither, if it be sold I undertake ere Michælmas, that there shall be a Tomb, and somewhat else over my Father's grave, on whose Soul God have mercy, that there shall none be like it in Norfolk ; and as ye shall be glad hereafter to see it ; and God send me leisure that I may come home, and if I do not, yet the money shall be put to none other use, but kept by some other that ye trust, till that it may be bestowed according as is above written, and else I give you cause never to trust me while ye and I live.[1]

When I was last with you, ye granted, that the said Cloth of Gold should be wared (*expended in exchange*) about this work, that is above written, which if ye will perform, I undertake that there shall be such a Tomb, as ye shall be pleased with, though it cost me 20 marks of mine own purse beside, if I once set upon it.

No more, but I beseech God have you in his keeping.

Written at London the Wednesday in Whitsun-week, in the 18th year of Edward IV.

Please you to send me word by Wheatley of your pleasure herein.

By your Son,
JOHN PASTON, Knight.

231. THE SAME. GOOD ADVICE (1478)

To the Right Worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight.

I GREET you well and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that I have sent you by Wheatley the Cloth of Gold, charging you that it be not sold to

[1] It was twelve years since his father's burial.

none other use than to the performing of your Father's Tomb, as ye send me word in writing; if ye sell it to any other use, by my truth, I shall never trust you while I live.

Remember that it cost me 20 marks, the pledging out of it, and if I were not glad to see that [tomb] made, I would not depart from it. Remember you what charge I have had with you of late, which will not be for my ease this two years; when ye may better, I trust ye will remember it.

My Cousin Clere doth as much cost at Bromholm as will draw an 100*l.* upon the Desks in the Choir, and in other places, at Heydon in likewise, and if there should nothing be done for your Father, it would be too great a shame for us all, and in chief to see him lie as he doth.

Also as I understand that my Cousin Robert Clere thinketh great unkindness in dealing with him of Peacock, for certain Pasture that ye granted him to have, and Peacock hath let it to others, such as he list to let it to, notwithstanding my Cousin hath laid the pasture with his Cattle, and Peacock hath distrained them. I think this dealing is not as it should be: I would that each of you should do for other, and live as Kinsmen and Friends; for such Servants may make trouble betwixt you, which were against courtesy, so near neighbours as ye be. He is a man of substance and worship, and so will be taken in this shire; and I were loath that ye should lose the good will of such as may do for you.

Item, whereas ye have begun your claim in Hellesdon and Drayton, I pray God send you good speed and furtherance in it; ye have as good a season as ye would wish, considering that your Adversary stands not in best favour with the King.

Also ye have the voice in this Country, that ye may do as much with the King, as any Knight that is belonging to the Court; if it be so, I pray God continue it; and also that ye should marry right nigh of the Queen's blood; what she is we are not as certain, but if it be so, that your Land should come again by the

reason of your marriage, and to be set in rest, at the reverence of God forsake it not, if ye can find in your heart to love her, so that she be such one as ye can think to have Issue by, or else by my truth, I had rather that ye never married in your life.

Also, if your matter take not now to good effect, ye and all your Friends may repent them that ye began your claim, without that ye have taken such a sure way, as may be to your intent, for many inconveniences that may fall thereof; God send you good speed in all your matters.

Written at Mawteby the day after Saint Austin in May (May 25) the 18th year of King Edward the IVth.

By your Mother.

232. Peacock's Accounts (1477)

To the Right Worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight.

Right Worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership, pleaseth you, as for Pickering's matter, I sent a Fryer in John Pickering's name for the evidence, and he had an answer that if he had a bushell full of evidence, he could none have of them, for he hath set the land in trouble, nor he could have no sight of none. Also remember your right of your wreck at Winterton: these are the men's names of Winterton,—Robert Parker, of West-Somerton, John Langard, of Winterton, Thomas Goodknape, of the same, William Wrantham, and John Curteys, of the same Winterton, that carried off your several (*private, enclosed*) ground 22 carts full of stuff, 8 score Bowstaves, 4 score and 7 Wainscots, 1400 Clapald (*Clapboard ?*), 5 barrels of tar, 4 couple of oars, and great plenty of wreck of the ship, that is worth much money, as ye shall understand the truth after this; and as for your Herring that should into Essex, they are there by the grace of God; as for your Swans, they shall be there by our Lady's day next coming, I trust to God, who have your mastership in his keeping.

Written at Maultby, whereas I am right weary, on Saint Andrew's day (30 Nov.), the 17th of Edward IV.

Sir, if it please your mastership, I sold yet no barley, nor none can above 14*d.* the Comb, as I sent word in a letter by John Russ; and I took 4*l.* in money to bring to your mastership. The price of your Herrings is 4*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* besides other costs. Harry Cook would go with your Swans, for his gift should be 6*s.* 8*d.*, and therefore he would give you his labour, if so be ye payed for his costs. Ipse dixit.

By your Servant,

WILLIAM PEACOCK.

The ship must have come ashore on Paston's own land, or beach abutting on it.

233. PESTILENCE. SIR JOHN NERVOUS

To the right worshipful Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered

[Abridged.]

PLEASE it you to weet, that I have been here at London a fortnight, whereof the first four days I was in such fear of the Sickness, and also found my Chamber and Stuff not so clean as I deemed, which troubled me sore; and as I told you at my departing, I was not well monied, for I had not past ten Marks, whereof I departed 40*s.* to be delivered of my old Bedfellow; and then I rode beyond Dunstable, and there speak with one of my Witnesses, which promised me to take labour, and to get me writings touching this matter, between me and the Duke of Suffolk, and I rewarded him 20*s.* and then, as I informed you, I paid five Marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) incontinent upon my coming here to repledge out my Gown of Velvet and other Gear; and then I hoped to have borrowed some of Townshend, and he hath fooded me forth (*put me off*) ever since, and in effect I could have at the most and at the soonest yesterday 20*s.* wherefore I beseech you to purvey me an 100*s.* and also to write to Peacock, that he purvey me as much, 100*s.*

which I suppose that he hath gathered at Paston and other Places, by this time; for without I have this 10*l.* as God help me, I fear I shall do but little good in no matter, nor yet I wote not how to come home, but if I have it.

This Gear hath troubled me so, that it hath made me more than half sick, as God help me. . . . Written in haste with short advisement on the Friday next Saint Simon and Jude (Oct. 28), in the 19th year of Edward IV.

Let my brother John see this bill, for he knoweth more of the matter.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

Sir John Paston died, Nov. 15, 1479.

234. SIR JOHN'S BOOK-BILL [1469?]

To my most worshipful Master, Sir John Paston, Knight.

MY most worshipful and most special Master, with all my service, most lowly I recommend [me] unto your good Mastership, beseeching you most tenderly to see me somewhat rewarded for my labour in the Great Book[1] which I wrote unto your said good Mastership. I have often times written to Pampyng, according to your desire, to inform you how I have laboured in writings for you, and I see well he speak not to your Mastership of it; and God knoweth I lie in Sanctuary at great costs, and amongst right unreasonable askers.

I moved this matter to Sir Thomas [Lewis] lately, and he told me he would move your Mastership therein, which Sir Thomas desired me to remember well what I I have had in Money at sundry times of him.

(Then comes the Account, as stated more at large in the following Bill.)

And in especial I beseech you to send me for Alms one of your old Gowns, which will countervail much of the premises I wot well; and I shall be yours while I live, and at your commandment; I have greatly missed

[1] *I.e.* a large volume containing several works, as was then usual.

of it God knows, whom I beseech preserve you from all adversity; I am somewhat acquainted with it.

Your very man,
WM. EBESHAM.

* Following appeareth, parcelly, divers and sundry manner of Writings, which I William Ebesham have written for my good and worshipful Master, Sir John Paston, and what money I have received, and what is unpaid.

	s.	*d.*
"First, I did write to his Mastership a little Book of Physic, for which I had paid by Sir Thomas Lewis, in Westminster . .		20
"Item, I had for the writing of half the Privy Seal, of Pampyng		8
"Item, for the writing of the said whole Privy Seal of Sir Thomas . . .	2	
"Item, I wrote eight of the Witnesses in Parchment but after 14*d.* a-piece, for which I was paid of Sir Thomas	10	
"Item, while my said Master was over the sea in Midsummer term, Calle set me at work to write two times the Privy Seal in paper, and then after clearly in parchment . .	4	8
And also I wrote at the same time one or more of the longest Witnesses, and other diverse and necessary Writings, for which he promised me 10*s.* (whereof I had of Calle but 4*s.* 8*d.*) due 5*s.* 4*d.*	5	4
"Item, I received of Sir Thomas at Westminster 30 October 8 E. IV. 1468 . .	3	4
"Item, I did write two Quires of paper of Witnesses, every Quire containing 14 leaves after 2*d.* a leaf	4	8
"Item, as to the Great Book First, for writing of the Coronation; and other Treatises of Knighthood, in that quire which containeth a 13 leaves and more, 2*d.* a leaf	2	2

	s.	d.
"Item, for the Treatise of War in four books, which containeth 60 leaves after 2*d.* a leaf	10	
"Item, for Othea, an Epistle, which containeth 43 leaves	7	2
"Item, for the Challenges, and the Acts of Arms which is 28 leaves	4	8
"Item, for De Regimine Principum,[1] which containeth 45 leaves, after 1 penny a leaf, which it is right well worth . . .	3	9
"Item, for Rubrishing[2] of all the Book	3	4
	63	5

	£	s.	d.
Sum received . . .		22	4
* Sum unpaid . . .		41	1
Sum Total	3	3	5

WILLIAM EBESHAM.

At this time the common wages of a Mechanic were, with diet, 4*d.* and without diet 5½*d.* or 6*d.* a day: we here see that a writer received 2*d.* for writing a folio leaf, three of which he could with ease finish in a day, [and] I should think that many quick writers at that time would fill four, five, or even six in a day, if so, the pay of these greatly exceeded that of common handicraft men. (F.)

235. CATALOGUE OF SIR JOHN'S BOOKS

The Inventory of English Books, of John Paston, made the 5th day of November, in the . . . year of the reign of Edward IV.

1. A BOOK had of my Hostess at the George, of the Death of Arthur, beginning at Cassibelan, Guy Earl of Warwick, King Richard Cœur de Lyon, a Chronicle to Edward the III. price.

[1] De Reg. Principum—by being written for a penny each leaf I suppose it was in quarto. (F.)

[2] This either means ornamenting the whole with red Capital Letters, or writing the heads of the several Treatises or Chapters in red Letters. (F.)

2. Item, a Book of Troilus, which William Br[andon ?] hath had near ten years, and lent it to Dame . . . . Wyngfeld, and there I saw it . . . worth
3. Item, a black Book, with the Legend of Ladies; [La Belle Dame] sans Mercy; The Parliament of Birds; The Temple of Glass,[1]; Palatyse and Scitacus (*Palamon and Arcite?*); the Meditations of . . ; [Sir Gawain and the] Green Knight . . . worth
4. Item, a Book in print of the play of [the Chess] (*Caxton's*, 1475.)
5. Item, a Book lent Midelton, and therein is: Belle Dame sans Mercy (*by Richard Ross*); the Parliament of Birds; Ballad of Guy and Colbrond; . . . the Goose [The Horse the Sheep and]; The Disputing between Hope and Despair; . . . Merchants; The Life of Saint Cry[stopher].
6. A red Book that Percival Robsart gave me, of the Meeds of the Mass (*The Neglicences happyng in the Mass and of the Remedies?*); the Lamentation of Child Ipotis (*i.e. Epictetus*); A Prayer to the Vernicle; . . . called the Abbey of the Holy Ghost.[2]
7. Item, in quires Tully de Senectute in diverse . . . whereof there is no more clear writing.
8. Item, in quires Tully or Cypio de Amicitia,[3] left with William Worcester . . . worth
9. Item, in quires, a Book of the Policy of In. . . .
10. Item, in quires, a Book de Sapientiâ (*Lydgate's Court of Sapience?*), wherein the second person is likened to Sapience.
11. Item, a Book de Othea (*on Wisdom*) text and gloss, worth in quires (*see* G. v., p. 3, *note*).

Memorandum; mine old Book of Blazonings of Arms.

Item, the new Book portrayed and blazoned.

Item, a Copy of Blazonings of Arms, and the names to be found by Letter (*alphabetically*).

[1] Probably the four ballads of Lydgate, with these titles.
[2] A devotional work of the time.
[3] Almost certainly Cicero's "De Amicitia" (which Wm. Worcester borrowed and translated), and that favourite didactic work (a pious forgery) the "Somnium Scipionis."

Item, a Book with Arms portrayed in paper.

Memorandum; my Book of Knighthood; (*the Great Book*); and the manner of making of Knights; of Jousts, of Tournaments; fighting in Lists; paces holden by Soldiers; Challenges; Statutes of War; and de Regimine Principum [by Occleve] . . . worth

Item, a Book of new Statutes from Edward the iiii. (*error for iii.?*)

G. considers these books to have belonged to John the Youngest (*cf.* Vol. VI., p. 65 n.). But several of the books are on Ebbesham's list; and Sir John writes much about books. "In print" need not be a later term than the first year of printing. If the "Legend of Ladies" is the late poem by the authoress of "The Flower and the Leaf," called "The Assembly of Ladies," this would suit G.'s theory, but perhaps it might be Chaucer's "Legend of Good Women." Possibly the last entry was added later. The George was Sir John's resort.

PART XIII

JOHN THE YOUNGEST SEEKING A WIFE

1474–1477

PART XIII

236. JOHN THE YOUNGEST SEEKING A WIFE: TRYING THREE LADIES AT ONCE (1474)

To Sir John Paston, Knight, or to his Brother Edmund in his absence, lodged at the George, by Paul's Wharf, in London.

RIGHT worshipful sir, I recommend me to you, praying you to remember, ere ye depart out of London, to speak with Harry Eberton's wife, draper, and to inform her that I am proffered a marriage in London, which is worth 600 marks (400*l.*) and better, with whom I prayed you to commune, inasmuch as I might not tarry in London myself; always reserving, that if so be that Mistress Eberton will deal with me, that ye should not conclude in the other place; though so were that Eberton would not give so much with Mistress Elizabeth his daughter, as I might have with the other, for such fantasy as I have in the said Mistress Elizabeth Eberton; and that it like you to say to Eberton's wife, that such as I spake to her of shall be bettered rather than impaired as for my part; and if it like her to deal with me, I will be at London for that cause only within fourteen days after the writing of this letter, with God's grace, who preserve you and yours. Written at Norwich, on Saint James's day.

Also, Sir, I pray you that ye will, as I desired you, commune with John Lee, or his wife, or both, and to understand how the matter at the Black Friars doth, and that ye will see and speak with the thing yourself, and with her father and her mother, ere ye depart; and

that it like you to desire John Lee's wife to send me a bill in all haste possible, how far forth the matter is, and whether it shall be necessary for me to come up to London hastily or not, or else to cast all at the Cock (*throw it all up?*) Also, I pray you that Pitt may truss in a mail, which I left in your chamber at London, my tawny gown furred with black, and the doublet of purple satin, and the doublet of black satin, and my writing box of cypress, and my "Book of the Meeting of the Duke and of the Emperor"[1]; and when all this gear is trussed in the mail, to deliver it to the bearer hereof, to bring me to Norwich.

Item, I send you herewith the pillion for the mail, and 10*s.* for the hire, which is usury, I take God to record.

Also, that it like you to speak to your apothecary, which was sometime the Earl of Warwick's apothecary, and to weet of him what the widow of the Black Friars is worth, and what her husband's name was: he can tell all, for he is executor to the widow's husband. I pray you forget me not, no more than I do you. . . .

Also, brother Edmund, I pray you, and my brother Sir John be not in London, that ye will labour all these matters with effect, as my trust is in you in every point as is above written. . . .

Also I sent John Lee's wife a letter by one Crawthorn, dwelling in Wood Street, or else in Silver Street, at the end of Wood Street: I pray you weet whether she had it or not; and she had it not, brother Edmund, I pray you go to the same Crawthorn, and take the letter of him, and deliver it her in all haste.

JOHN PASTON.

[1] His book most probably contained an account of some meeting between Charles Duke of Burgundy and the Emperor Frederick III. (F.)

237. Discouragement (1474)

[Abridged.]

To John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, or to Roose, dwelling afore Mrs. Paston's Gate, in Norwich.

[Mistress Paston is believed to have had a handsome house close to St. Peter's, Hungate, which church she and her husband restored.]

Right worshipful and well beloved Brother, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that I have communed with your friend Dawnson, and have received your Ring of him, and he hath by mine advice spoken with her [1] [Lady W.] two times; he telleth me of her dealing and answers, which if they were according to his saying, a fainter Lover than ye, would and well ought to take therein great comfort, so that he might haply sleep the worse three nights after.

And such dealing in part as between my lady W[algrave] and your friend Dawnson he wrote me a bill thereof, which I send you herewith; and that that longeth to me to do therein, it shall not fail to leave all other business apart; nevertheless within three days, I hope so to deal herein, that I suppose to set you in certainty how that ye shall find her for ever hereafter.

It is so, as I understand, that ye be as busy on your side for your friend Dawnson, whereas (*if*) ye be, I pray God send you both good speed in these works, which if they be brought about, each of you is much beholden to other; yet were it pity that such crafty Woers, as ye be both, should speed well, but if ye love truly.

Item, as for Stocton's Daughter, she shall be wedded in haste to Skeerne, as she told herself to my Silkmaid, which maketh part of such as she shall wear, to whom she broke (*opened*) her heart, and told her, that she should have had Master Paston, and my Maid weened it hath been I that she spoke of; and with more, that

[1] Lady Walgrave, widow of Sir Richard Walgrave. Her brother-in-law, a lawyer of the Norfolk connection, seems to have been a friend of John the Youngest, but had lately died.

the same Master Paston came where she was with 20 men, and would have taken her away ; I told my Maid that she lied of me, and that I never spoke with her in my life, nor that I would not wed her to have with her 3000 Marks (2000*l.*).

Item, as for Eberton's Daughter, my brother Edmond saith, that he heard never more speech thereof since your departing, and that ye would that he should not break, nor do nothing therein but if it came of their beginning . . . .

Written at London, the Sunday the 20th of November, in the 14th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

Silk making, of girdles, laces, etc., was becoming a London industry and silk was the fashionable wear.

238. LADY WALGRAVE'S REFUSAL

To John Paston, Esquire.

BROTHER, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that I have, like as I promised you I have, done my endeavour to know my Lady Walgrave's stomach (*mind*), which, as God help me, and to be plain to you, I find in her no matter nor cause, that I might take comfort of.

She will in no wise receive, nor keep your Ring with her, and yet I told her that she should not be any thing bound thereby ; but that I knew by your heart of old, that I wist well ye would be glad to forbear the lievest (*dearest*) thing that ye had in the world, which might be daily in her presence, that should cause her once on a day to remember you ; but it would not be, she would not thereby as she said, put you nor keep you in any comfort thereby.

And moreover she prayed me, that I should never take labour more herein, for she would hold her to such answer as she had given you tofore ; wherewith she thought both ye and I would have held us content, had [it] not been [for] the words of her Sister Genevieve.

When I understood all this, and that over night she bad her that went between her and me, bid me bring with me her Muskball[1] which, &c. then I after all this asked if she were displeased with me for it, and she said, nay.

Then I told her, that I had not sent it you, for sin of my soul; and so I told her all, how I had written to you, why that I would not send it to you, because I wist well ye should have sleeped the worse; but now, I told her, as God help me, that I would send it you, and give you mine advice not to hope over much on her, which is over hard an hearted Lady for a young man to trust unto; which, I thought, that for all my words, ye could not nor would not do, for all mine advice.

Yet againwards, she is not displeased, nor forbid me not but that ye should have the keeping of her Muskball; wherefore do ye with it as ye like; I would it had done well by Good, I speak for you so, that in faith I trow I could not say so well again; wherefore I send you herewith your Ring, and the unhappy Muskball; also make ye matter of it hereafter as ye can, I am not happy (*fortunate*) to woo, neither for myself nor none other. . . .

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

239. SIR THOMAS AND DAME BREWS [of Stinton Hall in Salle and Topcroft] NEGOTIATING [1476?]

Unto my Right Worshipful Cousin John Paston, be this Letter delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful Cousin, I recommend me unto you, &c. And I sent mine husband a bill of the matter that ye know of, and he wrote another bill to me again touching the same matter, and he would that ye should go unto my mistress your mother, and assay if ye might get the whole 20*l.* into your hands, and then

[1] This Muskball, or ball of perfume, seems to have been taken from Lady Walgrave by Sir John Paston in a jesting manner, to send to his brother, as a present from her. (F.)

he would be more glad to marry with you, and will give you an 100*l.*, and, Cousin, that day that she is married, my father [Sir G. Debenham] will give her 50 marks. But and we accord, I shall give you a great treasure, that is, a witty gentlewoman, and if I say it, both good and virtuous; for if I should take money for her, I would not give her for a 1000*l.*; but, Cousin, I trust you so much, that I would think her well beset on you, and ye were worth much more. And, Cousin, a little after that ye were gone, came a man from my Cousin Derby, and brought me word that such a chance fell, that he might not come at the day that was set, as I shall let you understand more plainly, when I speak with you, &c. But, Cousin, and it would please you to come again, what day that ye will set, I dare undertake that they shall keep the same day, for I would be glad that, and mine husband and ye might accord in this marriage, that it might be my fortune to make an end of this matter between my cousins and you (*the old quarrel between the Pastons and the Debenhams and Heydons*), that each of you might love other in friendly wise, &c. And, Cousin, if this bill please not your intent, I pray you that it may be burnt, &c. No more unto you at this time, but Almighty Jesu preserve you, &c.

By your Cousin,
DAME ELIZABETH BREWS.

240. BUSINESS. THE STAPLE A BAD BANKER (June, 1477)

To John Paston, Esquire, being at the Sign of the George, at Paul's Wharf.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that I have received your letter, written the next day after Midsummer; for answer whereof, I think that to be bound in 500 marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*), I think it is too much; whereas I felt by you, ye should have with the gentlewoman but 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), nevertheless I

agree; but ye shall understand that I will not be bound for you that ye shall make her jointure past 20*l.* by year, within a certain day limited, be it one year or two, that is the largest that ye may perform; for as for the manor of Sparham, my mother and ye accord not in your sayings; she will nought grant you therein while she liveth, save as she saith to me, she hath granted you 10 marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) by year till 40*l.* be paid, that is but six years; and after her decease she will agree with good will, so that it may be your profferment, that ye should have that manor in jointure with your wife to the longer liver of you both, paying 10 marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) by year, so . . ., or as she will that it shall be; therefore as for 50 marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) jointure, I pray you bind me in no such clause; but if it be for 20*l.* by a reasonable day, and 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) after the decease of my mother. Take example at Derby.

Item, ye make you surer than I deem you be, for I deem that her friends will not be content with Bedingfeld's surety nor yours; I deem this matter will occupy longer leisure than ye deem for. Item, I remember that this money that she should have is not ready, but in the hands of Merchants of the Staple, which at a proof ye shall find per case so slack payers, that ye might be deceived thereby; I know divers have lost money ere they could get their dues out of the Staple. God speed you, and send you that ye would have.

I send you the obligation herewith, according to your desire, and a letter to Bedingfeld, thanking him for you, and moreover letting him know of mine intent; open it, and close it again, if ye list.

Item, where I told you that the gown cloth of old camblet, I would have it home for my sister Ann, ye forgot it; I pray you send it home by the next messenger, and a letter with it of such tidings as ye know.

[From Sir John Paston.]

241. Choosing a Valentine (Feb., 1477)

To my worshipful Cousin John Paston, Be this Bill delivered, &c.

Cousin, I recommend me unto you, Thanking you heartily for the great cheer ye made me, and all my Folks, the last time that I was at Norwich; and ye promised me, that ye would never break the matter to Margery unto such time, as ye and I were at a point. But ye have made her such [an] Advocate for you, that I may never have rest night nor day, for calling and crying upon me to bring the said matter to effect, &c.

And, Cousin, upon Friday is Saint Valentine's day, and every Bird chooseth him a Mate; and if it like you to come on Thursday at night, and so purvey you, that ye may abide there till Monday, I trust to God, that ye shall so speak to mine husband, and I shall pray, that we shall bring the matter to a conclusion, &c. For, Cousin,

> "It is but a simple Oak,
> That is cut down at the first stroke,"

for ye will be reasonable I trust to God, which have you ever in his merciful keeping, &c.

By your Cousin Dame Elizabeth Brews,
otherwise shall be called by God's Grace.

242. Margery's Valentine

Unto my right well beloved Valentine, John Paston, Esquire, be this Bill delivered, &c.

Right reverend and worshipful, and my right well beloved Valentine, I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve unto his pleasure, and your heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good hele of body, nor of heart, nor shall be till I hear from you;

For there wots no creature, what pain that I endure,
And for to be dead I dare it not discure (*discover*).

And my Lady my Mother hath laboured the matter to my father full diligently, but she can no more get than ye know of, for the which God knoweth I am full sorry. But if that ye love me, as I trust verily that ye do, ye will not leave me therefore.

And if ye command me to keep me true wherever I go,
I wis I will do all my might you to love, and never no mo.
And if my Friends say, that I do amiss,
They shall not let me so for to do,
Mine heart me bids evermore to love you,
Truly over all earthly thing,
And if they be never so wrath,
I trust it shall be better in time coming.

No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping; and I beseech you that this bill be not seen of none earthly Creature save only yourself, &c.

And this Letter was endited at Topcroft, with full heavy heart, &c.

By your own,
MARGERY BREWS.

243. A LOVE LETTER (1477)

To my Right Well beloved Cousin John Paston, Esquire, be this Letter delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful and well beloved Valentine, in my most humble wise, I recommend me unto you, &c. And heartily I thank you for the Letter, which that ye send me by John Beckerton, whereby I understand and know, that ye be purposed to come to Topcroft in short time, and without any errand or matter, but only to have a conclusion of the matter betwixt my father and you; I would be most glad of any Creature alive, so that the matter might grow to effect. And thereas ye say, and ye come and find the matter no more towards you than ye did aforetime, ye would no more put my father and my Lady my Mother to no cost nor business

for that cause a good while after, which causeth my heart to be full heavy; and if that ye come, and the matter take to none effect, then should I be much more sorry, and full of heaviness.

And as for myself I have done and understand in the matter [all] that I can or may, as God knoweth; and I let you plainly understand, that my father will no more money part withal in that behalf, but an 100*l.* and 50 marks, which is right far from the accomplishment of your desire.

Wherefore, if that ye could be content with that Good, and my poor Person, I would be the merriest maiden on ground; and if ye think not yourself so satisfied, or that ye might have much more Good, as I have understood by you afore; good, true, and loving Valentine, that ye take no such labour upon you, as to come more for that matter, But let [what] is, pass, and never more to be spoken of, as I may be your true Lover and Beadwoman during my life.

No more unto you at this time, but Almighty Jesu preserve you both body and soul, &c.

By your Valentine,

MARGERY BREWS.

244. ENCOURAGEMENT BEHIND THE SCENES.

Unto my right worshipful Master, John Paston, Esquire, be this bill delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, letting you know, as for the young Gentlewoman, she oweth you her good heart and love; as I know by the communication that I have had with her for the same.

And Sir, ye know what my Master and my Lady have proffered with her 200 Marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and I dare say, that her Chamber and Arayment shall be worth 100 Marks. And I heard my Lady say, that and the case required, both ye and she should have your board with my Lady three years after.

And I understand by my Lady, that she would that

ye should labour the matter to my Master, for it should be the better.

And I heard my Lady say,

"That it was a feeble Oak,
That was cut down at the first stroke."

And ye be beholden unto my Lady for her good word, for she hath never praised you too much.

Sir, like as I promised you, I am your man, and my good will ye shall have in word and deed, &c.

And Jesu have you in his merciful keeping, &c.

By your man,

THOMAS KELA

At the bottom of the Original Letter is written by J. Paston "brought by Will'm Chele" (F.) ? Kelly: possibly a chaplain of the Brews. The offer of board occurs so often in marriage contracts of this period that it seems to be an almost conventional provision.

245. SIR JOHN WEIGHS THREE PROPOSITIONS (1477)

To John Paston, Esq. in haste.

I HAVE received your letter, and your man Bykerton, by whom I know all the matter of Mistress Brews, which if it be as he saith, I pray God bring it to a good end.

Item, as for this matter of Mistress Barley, I hold it but a bare thing; I feel well that it passeth not . . . . marks; I saw her for your sake; she is a little one, she may be a woman hereafter, if she be not old now; her person seemeth 13 years of age, her years, men say, be full 18; she knoweth not of the matter I suppose, nevertheless she desired to see me, as glad as I was to see her.

I pray you send me some writing to Calais of your speed with Mistress Brews; Bykerton telleth me that she loveth you well; if I died, I had lever ye had her than the Lady Walgrave, nevertheless she singeth well with an harp.

Clopton is afraid of Sir T. Grey, for he is a widower now late, and, men say, that he is acquainted with her of old.

No more. Written on Sunday the 9th day of March, in the 17th year of Edward IV. to Calais ward.

If ye have Mistress Brews, and E. Paston Mistress Bylingford, ye be like to be brethren.

JOHN PASTON, Kt.

246. JOHN PASTON GROWS ANXIOUS

This Bill be delivered to Thomas Grene, Goodman of the George by Paul's Wharf, or to his Wife, to send to Sir John Paston, wheresoever he be, at Calais, London, or other places.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my most good and kind Brother, in as humble wise as I can, I recommend me to you; Sir, it is so that I have, since John Bykerton departed from home, been at Topcroft at Sir Thomas Brews's, and as for the matter that I sent you word of by John Bykerton, touching myselfe and Mistress Margery Brews, I am yet at no certainty; her father is so hard; but I trow, I have the good will of my Lady her mother and her; but as the matter proveth, I shall send you word with God's grace in short time.

But as for John Bykerton, I pray you deal with him for surety as a soldier should be dealt with, trust him never the more for the bill that I sent you by him, but as a man at wild, for every thing that he told me is not true; for he departed without license of his master Sir Thomas Brews, and is sore endangered (*in debt*) to divers in this country; I pray God that I write not to you of him too late; but for all this I know none untruth in him, but yet I pray you trust him not over much upon my word.

Sir, Perse Moody recommendeth him to your mastership, and beseecheth you to send him word in haste, how he shall be demeaned at your place at Caister; for he is assigned to nobody as yet, to take of meat and drink, nor yet where that he shall have money to pay for his meat and drink; and now is the chief replenishing of your warren there; the advantage of the Dove house were well for him, till ye come home yourself.

Sir, I pray you pardon me of my writing, howsoever it be, for Carpenters of my craft, that I use now [lovers] have not alder-best their wits their own; and Jesu preserve you.

Written at Norwich, the 9th day of March, in the 17th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON.

247. DAME BREWS TO MEET MISTRESS PASTON. THE FLOODS ARE OUT (1477)

To my right worshipful Mother Margaret Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Mother, after all duties of recommendation, in as humble wise as I can, I beseech you of your daily blessing. Mother, please it you to weet, that the cause that Dame Elizabeth Brews desireth to meet with you at Norwich, and not at Langley, as I appointed with you at my last being at Mawtby, is by my means, for my brother Thomas Jermyn, which knoweth nought of the match telleth me, that the Causey ere ye can come to Bokenham Ferry is so overflown that there is no man that may unethe (*scarcely*) pass it, though he be right well horsed; which is no meet way for you to pass over, God defend (*forbid*) it. But all things reckoned, it shall be less cost to you to be at Norwich, as for a day or tweyn and pass not, than to meet at Langley, where every thing is dear; and your horse may be sent home again the same Wednesday.

Mother, I beseech you for diverse causes, that my Sister Anne may come with you to Norwich; Mother, the matter is in a reasonable good way, and I trust with God's mercy, and with your good help, that it shall take effect better to mine advantage than I told you of at Norwich; for I trow there is not a kinder woman living than I shall have to my Mother in law, if the matter take, nor yet a kinder Father in law than I shall have, though he be hard to me as yet.

All the circumstances of the matter, which I trust to

tell you at your coming to Norwich, could not be written in three leaves of paper, and ye know my lewd (*stupid*) head well enough, I may not write long, wherefore I ferry over all things till I may await on you myself. I shall do tun into your place a dozen Ale, and Bread according, against Wednesday. If Sym might be forborne (*spared*) it were well done, that he were at Norwich on Wednesday in the morning at market. Dame Elizabeth Brews shall lie at John Cook's; if it might please you, I would be glad that she might dine in your house on Thursday, for there should you have most secret talking.

And mother, at the reverence of God, beware that ye be so purveyed for, that ye take no cold by the way towards Norwich, for it is the most perilous March that ever was seen by any man's days now living; and I pray to Jesu preserve you and yours.

Written at Topcroft, the 8th day of March.

Your Son and humble Servant,

JOHN PASTON.

Anne married Wm. Yelverton, grandson of John Paston's old rival, Judge Yelverton, the same year, 1477. Cooke was a wealthy citizen, afterwards Mayor of Norwich.

248. SIR THOMAS THINKS SIR JOHN SHOULD DO HIS PART

To my right worshipful Cousin Sir John Paston, Knight, be this Letter delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful, and my heartily well beloved Cousin I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare, which I pray God may be as continually good as I would have mine own; and Cousin, the cause of my writing unto you, at this time, is I feel well by my Cousin John Paston your Brother, that ye have understanding of a matter, which is in communication touching a Marriage, with God's Grace, to be concluded betwixt my said Cousin your Brother, and my Daughter Margery, which is far communed, and not yet con-

cluded, nor neither shall nor may be, till I have answer from you again of your good will and assent to the said matter; and also of the obligation (*promise to pay*) which that I send you herewith; for Cousin I would be sorry to see either my Cousin your Brother, or my Daughter, driven to live so mean a life as they should do, if the six score pounds should be paid of their marriage money; and Cousin, I have taken myself so near in leaving of (*parting with*) this said six score pounds, that whereas I had laid up an 100*l.* for the marriage of a younger Daughter of mine, I have now lent the said 100*l.* and 20*l.* over that, to my Cousin your Brother, to be paid again by such easy days as the obligation, which I send you herewith, specifies.

And Cousin, I were right loath to bestow so much upon one daughter, that the other her Sisters should fare the worse; wherefore, Cousin, if ye will that this matter shall take effect under such form as my Cousin your brother hath written unto you, I pray you put thereto your good will, and some of your Cost, as I have done of mine more largely than ever I purpose to do to any two of her Sisters, as God knoweth mine intent, whom I beseech to send you your levest heart's desire.

Written at Topcroft, the 8th day of March, &c.

By your Cousin,

THOMAS BREWS, Knight.

The £120 was to redeem Swainsthorpe, which John the Youngest had mortgaged to Bowen of the Exchequer.

249. SIR THOMAS DEFINITE

A Determination of Sir Thomas Brews how much he would give with his Daughter Margery in Marriage.

MEMORANDUM, To let my Cousin Margaret Paston understand, that for a jointure to be made in Swainsthorp in hand, and for a jointure of no more but 10 marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) out of Sparham, I will depart with 200 marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) in hand, and to give them their board free as for two or three years in certain, or

else 300 marks (200*l.*) without their board, payable by 50 marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) yearly, till the sum of 300 marks be full paid.

Item, I will give 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) payable 50*l.* in hand at the day of marriage, and 50*l.* yearly, till the sum of 400 marks be full paid, upon these conditions following.

Whereof one condition is this,

That I will lend my Cousin John Paston sixscore pounds, besides his marriage money, to pledge out the manor of Swainsthorp, so that (*on condition*) he may find such a friend as will pay me again the said sixscore pounds by 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) a year, so that it be not paid of the marriage money, nor of the proper goods of my said cousin John.

Or else, another condition is this,

If it be so that my said Cousin John may be suffered, from the day of his marriage to my daughter, to take the whole profits of the manor of Sparham, besides the manor of Swainsthorp, for term of their two lives, and the longest of them living, yet will I be agreeable to depart with the said 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) payable again in form above-said.

And if these or any of the conclusions may be taken, I am agreeable to make the bargain sure, or else no more to be spoken of.

250. JOHN'S NOTES OF THE TERMS.

Notes touching the Marriage between John Paston, Esq. and Margery Brews.

MEMORANDUM, To keep secret from my mother that the bargain is full concluded.

Item, to let her have first, knowledge that in the chapel (whereas ye would had been no book nigh by ten miles) that when Master Brews said that he would shortly have either more land in jointure than Swainsthorp and ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) out of Sparham, or else that some friend of mine should pay the sixscore

pounds, so that it should not be paid of the marriage money, that then I swore on a [sacred] book to him, that I would never of my motion endanger mother nor brother farther than I had done; for I thought that my mother had done much for me to give me the manor of Sparham in such form as she had done; but Master Brews will not agree, without that my mistress his daughter and I be made sure of it now in hand, and that we may take the whole profits, whatsoever fortune.

Item, to inform my mother that if so be that we may be put in possession of all the whole manor during our two lives, and the longest of us living, that then Master Brews will give me in marriage with my mistress his daughter 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) payable in hand 50*l.* and so yearly 50*l.* till the sum of 400 marks be full paid.

Item, that whereas he had laid up 100*l.* for the marriage of a younger daughter of his, he will lend me the same 100*l.* and 20*l.* more, to pledge out my land, and he to be paid again his 100*l.* and 20*l.* by 10*l.* by year.

Item, to advise my mother that she break not for the yearly value of Sparham above the ten marks during her life.

It appears that these conditions were discussed in the chapel, where J. Paston swore on one of the service books, that he never would consent to the endangering of any of his friends by their entering into an obligation for the repayment of the sixscore pounds.

This condition, by what follows, seems to have been given up, and the agreement appears to be, that the sixscore pounds should be repayed by him by £10 every year on his own security only. (F.)

251. Sir John's Sympathy and Objections

To my right Worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston.

Please it you to weet, that I have received your Letter, wherein is remembered the great hurt, that by likelihood might fall to my brother, if so be that this matter between him, and Sir Thomas Brews's Daughter take not effect; whereof I would be as sorry as himself

reasonably; and also the wealthy and convenient marriage, that should be if it take effect; whereof I would be as glad as any man; and am better content now, that he should have her, than any other that ever he was heretofore about to have had. Considered her Person, her Youth, and the stock that she is come of, the Love on both sides, the tender favour that she is in with her father and mother; the kindness of her father and mother to her in departing with her, the favour also, and good conceit that they have in my Brother, the worshipful and virtuous disposition of her father and mother, which prognosticateth that, of likelihood, the maid should be virtuous and good, all which considered, and the necessary relief that my Brother must have, I marvel the less, that ye have departed (*made a gift*), and given him the manor of Sparham, in such form as I have knowledge of by W. Gornay, Lomner, and Skipwith; and I am right glad to see in you such kindness unto my Brother as ye have done to him; and would by my truth lever than an 100*l.* that it were fee simple land, as it is intailed, which by likelihood should prosper with him and his blood the better in time to come, and should also never cause debate in our blood in time to come, which God defend (*forbid*), for that were unnatural.

Item, another inconvenience is, whereas I understand that the manor is given to my Brother, and to his Wife, and to the Issue between them begotten; if the case were so, that he and she had issue together a Daughter or more, and his wife died, and he married after another, and had issue a Son, that Son should have none land, and he being his father's Heir, and for the inconvenience that I have known late enure in case like, and yet endureth in Kent, between a Gentleman and his Sister, I would ye took the advice of your counsel in this point, and that [which] is past you by writing or by promise, I deem verily in you, that ye did it of kindness, and in eschewing of a more ill that might befall.

Item, whereas it pleaseth you that I should ratify,

grant, and confirm the said gift unto my Brother, it is so, that with mine honesty I may not, and for other causes.

The Pope will suffer a thing to be used, but he will not license nor grant it to be used nor done, and so I.

My Brother John knoweth mine intent well enough heretofore in this matter; I will be found to him as kind a Brother as I may be.

Item, if it be so that Sir Thomas Brews and his Wife think that I would trouble my Brother and his Wife in the said Manor, I can find no means to put them in surety thereof, but if it need, to be bound in an obligation with a condition that I shall not trouble nor infest them therein.

Item, I think that she is made sure enough in estate in the land, and that of right I deem they shall make none obstacles at my writing, for I had never none estate in the land, nor I would not that I had.

No more to you at this time, but Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written at Calais, the 28th day of March in the 17th year of Edward IV.

By your Son,
JOHN PASTON, Knight.

Meaning that, Sparham being entailed on himself, after his mother's death, she can only give the income to John during her life, and that he will promise nothing, but will never disturb his brother in possession.

252. MORE SYMPATHY. A VISION (April, 1477)

To John Paston, Esquire.

RIGHT worshipful and heartily beloved Brother, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that as by Peirse Moody, when he was here, I had no leisure to send answer in writing to you, and to my Cousin Gurney, of your Letters, but for a conclusion ye shall find me to you as kind as I may be, my conscience and worship saved, which, when I speak with you and them, ye both shall well understand; and I pray God send

you as good speed in that matter as I would ye had and as I hope ye shall have ere this Letter come to you; and I pray God send you Issue between you, that may be as honourable as ever was any of your Ancestors and theirs, whereof I would be as glad in manner as of mine own; wherefore I pray you send me word how ye do, and if God fortune me to do well, and be of any power, I will be to Sir Thomas Brewse, and my Lady his wife, a very Son-in-law for your sake, and take them as ye do, and do for them as if I were in case like with them as ye be.

No more, but Jesu have you in keeping.

Written at Calais, the 14th day of April, in the 17th year of Edward IV.

As for tidings the French King hath gotten many of the Towns of the Duke of Burgundy, as Saint Quentin's, Abbeville, Montreuil; and now of late he hath gotten Bethune and Hêsdin with the Castle there, which is one of the royalest Castles of the world; and on Sunday at even the Admiral of France laid siege at Boulogne; and this day it is said, that the French King shall come thither; and this night it is said, that there was a Vision seen about the Walls of Boulogne, as it had been a Woman with a marvellous light; men deem that our Lady there, will shew herself a Lover to that Town: God forefend that it were French, it were worth 40,000*l.* that it were English.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

253. SIR JOHN LOSES HIS TEMPER AND WASHES HIS HANDS OF ALL (1477)

To his well-beloved Brother, John Paston, Esq.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that I received a letter of yours by Edward Hensted two days after that Wheatley was departed from me, which he had forgotten in his casket, as he said, whereof I should have sent you answer by Wheatley, if I had had it before he went: notwithstanding I am right loath to

write in that matter oft; for, for a conclusion, I wrote to my Mother by Perse Moody all that I might and would do therein; ye have also now written again: You need not to pray me to do that might be to your profit and worship, that I might do, oftener than once, or to let me weet thereof, for to my power I would do for you, and take as much pain for your weal, and remember it when per case (*perchance*) ye should not think on it yourself. I would be as glad that one gave you a manor of 20*l.* by year, as if he gave it to myself by my troth.

Item, where[as] ye think that I may with conscience recompense it again unto our stock of other lands that I have of that value in fee simple, it is so that Snailwell by my grandfather's will once, and by father's will secondly, is entailed to the issue of my father's body.

Item, as for Sporle 20*l.* by year, I had thereof but 20 marks by year, which 20 marks by year and the 10 marks over (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), I have endangered, as ye well know of the bargain; which, if it be not redeemed, I must recompense some other manor of mine to one of my brethren for the said 10 marks and 20 marks that longeth to me, wherefore I keep the manor of Runham; then have I fee simple land the manor of Winterton with Bastwick and Billys, which in all is not 20 marks by year, which is not to the value of the manor of Sparham. And as for Caister, it were no convenient land to exchange for such a thing; nor it were not policy for me to set that manor in such case for all manner of haps. I need not to make this excuse to you, but that your mind is troubled; I pray you not to rejoice yourself too much in hope to obtain a thing that all your friends may not ease you of, for if my mother were disposed to give me and any woman in England the best manor that she hath to have it to me and my wife, and to the heirs of our two bodies begotten, I would not take it of her by God. Stablish yourself upon a good ground, and grace shall follow; your matter is far spoken of and blown wide, and if it prove no better, I would that it had never been spoken of.

Also that matter noiseth me, that I am so unkind that I let (*hinder it*) altogether. I think not a matter happy nor well handled nor politically dealt with, when it can never be finished without an inconvenience, and to any such bargain, I keep never to be condescending nor of counsel; if I were at the beginning of such a matter, I would have hoped to have made a better conclusion, if they mock you not. This matter is driven thus far forth without my counsel; I pray you make an end without my counsel: if it be well, I would be glad; if it be otherwise, it is pity; I pray you trouble me no more in this matter.

JOHN PASTON, Kt.

254. MARGARET PASTON'S FINAL EFFORT

To the Right Worshipful and my very good Lady and Cousin Dame Elizabeth Brews.

RIGHT worshipful, and my chief Lady and Cousin, as heartily as I can I recommend me to you; Madam, liketh you to understand that the chief cause of my writing to you at this season is this; I wot well it is not unremembered with you the large communication that divers times hath been had touching the marriage of my Cousin Margery your daughter and my son John, of which I have been as glad, and now latewards as sorry, as ever I was for any marriage in my life; and where or in whom the default of the breach is, I can have no perfect knowledge; but, Madam, if it be in me or any of mine, I pray you assign a day, when my Cousin your husband and ye think to be at Norwich towards Sall, and I will come thither to you, and I think, ere ye and I depart, that the default shall be known where it is, and also that with your advice and help, and mine together, we shall take some way that it shall not break; for if it did, it were none honour to neither parties, and in chief to them in whom the default is, considering that it is so far spoken.

And Madam, I pray you that I may have perfect

knowledge by my son [in law] Yelverton, bearer hereof, when this meeting shall be, if ye think it expedient, and the sooner the better in eschewing of worse; for, Madam, I know well if it be not concluded in right short time, that as for my son he intendeth to do right well by my Cousin Margery and not so well by himself, and that should be to me, nor I trust to you, no great pleasure, if it so fortuned, as God defend, whom I beseech to send you your levest desires.

Madam, I beseech you that I may be recommended by this bill to my cousin your husband, and to my Cousin Margery, to whom I supposed to have given another name ere this time. Written at Mawtby on Saint Barnabas's day (11th June).

By your

MARGARET PASTON.

John Paston married Margery Brews the same year, 1477.

PART XIV

THE YOUNGER BROTHERS BEGINNING LIFE, 1473–1481

PART XIV

255. Providing for Edmund [1473 ?]

To John Paston, or to his Brother Edmund Paston, at the George, at Paul's Wharf.

Brother Edmund, it is so that I hear tell that ye be in hope to come hither, and to be in such wages as ye shall come [and] live like a gentleman, whereof I would be glad; wherefore for your better speed, I let you weet that Hugh Beaumont is dead; wherefore I would ye had his room (*place*), now or never, if ye can bring it about; else, if ye dispose you to abide in England, since it is so that the Bishop of Lincoln[1] is Chancellor, his service is the meeter for you, he is next neighbour to Norfolk of any estate: God send you some good ward of his.

I pray you, if your leisure be thereafter to remember Townshend, that he, with the advice and assistance of my Master of the Rolls, have one day of march[2] with the slow Bishop of Winchester, that he may keep his promise, that is to say, to entreat the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk for Caister; he promised to do it, and to lay out an 100*l.* for the same.

Item, I pray you send me some tidings within five days after that you see this bill. Written at Calais, the 13th day of June.

John Paston, Kt.

[Dated by G. as 1475 and not later. But the references may suit 1473 as well, and see next letter.]

[1] Rotherham, officially Chancellor, May, 1474. But deputies held the Chancery in 1472–3 while Stillington was ill.

[2] Meeting (?) or, perhaps, bargain.

256. Edmund at Calais (July, 1473)

To Edmund Paston, Esquire, at Calais, be this delivered.

Brother Edmund, I greet you well, letting you weet, that about this day sev'night I sent you a Letter, by Nicholas Bardesley a Soldier, which is wont to be at board at Peraunts; and also an Hosecloth of black for you; I weened that ye should have it within two days, but I am afeared that he deceived me.

Item, I let you weet that Plattyng is coming hither, and he saith, that ye gave him leave to fetch his gear and Pytt's; and that is his errand hither and none other, nor he thought never to go from me, nor he will not go from me, as he saith; wherefore I pray you send me word of his conditions, and why ye think that he should never do me worship.

He saith also, that he and Pytt were at the taking of the Easterlings [German Hanse fleet], and that he was in the Packer, and Pytt in the Christopher; I pray you send me word how both he and Pytt quit them, by the report of some indifferent true man that was there; if they quit them well, I would love them the better; wherefore the next day after the sight of this letter, I pray you write again, and send it by the next passage.

Item, I send you a little pretty Box herewith, which I would that Juddy should deliver to the woman that he weeteth of, and pray her to take it to the man that she weeteth of; that is to say, as much as ye know all well enough, but ye may not make you wise, in no wise.

Item, I pray you send me word as ye were wont to do, of her welfare; and whether I were out and other in or not; and whether ye shall forsake Calais as soon as she sent me word of, or not.

By God I would be with you as fain as yourself, and shall be in haste with God's grace.

Item, as for my brother John, I hope within this month to see him in Calais; for by likelihood to-morrow, or else the next day, he taketh ship at Yarmouth, and goeth to Saint James ward; and he

hath written to me that he will come homeward by Calais.

Item, I suppose that James Songer shall come with me to Calais, the rather for your sake.

Item, Mistress Elizabeth fareth well, but as yet Songer knoweth not so perfectly all that ye would weet, that he would not write to you of these two days, till he know more; but if she had been bold, and durst have abiden still at her gate, and spoken with me, so God help me, she had had this same that I send now, where ye wot of, which ye shall see worn hereafter, it is a pretty ribbon with pretty Aglets (*points*) and goodly.

Make you not wise to Juddy neither, not that ye would weet any thing, for I may say to you, at his coming over he brought goodly gear reasonably.

Item, as for my Bill (*long-handled battle-axe*), that is gilt, I would it were taken heed to, there is one in the town, that can glaze well enough, as I heard say; also there is one cometh every market day from St. Omer's to Calais, and he bringeth Daggers and fetcheth also, he may have it with him, and bring it again the next market day for 12*d.* or 16*d.* at the most; and else, let it be well oiled and kept till I come.

No more. Written at London the 5th day of July, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

Going to St. James-ward, of Compostella in Spain; possibly in the suite of some nobleman; but, as this pilgrimage was a customary means of getting out of England when convenient, the phrase may be *camouflage* for something else. In an earlier letter Sir John had observed that he believed in his brother's intention of going to St. James "as between two eyen, etc." (*i.e.* with a wink?).

257. WALTER GOING TO OXFORD [1473?]

Margaret Paston to [*James Gloys?*]

I RECOMMEND me to you, and thank you heartily of your letters, and diligent labour that ye have had in those matters that ye have written to me of, and in all

other, to my profit and worship, and in especial at this season, touching the matter that I sent you the Indenture of; ye have lightened my heart therein by a pound, for I was in fear that it would not have been done so hastily without danger (*borrowing*). And as for the letters that Thomas Holler's son should have brought me, I see neither him, nor the letters that he should have brought; wherefore I pray you heartily, if it be no disease to you, that ye will take the labour to bring Walter where he should be, and to purvey for him, that he may be set in good and sad rule, for I were loath to lose him, for I trust to have more joy of him than I have of them that be older; though it be more cost to me to send you forth with him, I hold me pleased, for I wot well ye shall best purvey for him, and for such things as is necessary to him, than another should do, after mine intent. As for any horse to lead (*carry*) his gear, methink it were best ye purvey one at Cambridge, less than (*unless*) ye can get any carrier thence to Oxford more hastily, and I marvel that the letters come not to me, and whether I may lay the default to the father or to the son, thereof. And I would Walter should be coupled with a better than Holler's son is, there as he shall be; how be it I would not that he shall make never the less of him, because he is his countryman and neighbour; and also I pray you write a letter in my name to Walter, after that (*according to what*) ye have known mine intent before this to him ward; so that he do well, learn well, and be of good rule and disposition, there shall nothing fail him that I may help with, so that it be necessary to him; and bid him that he be not too hasty of taking of orders that should bind him, till that he be of twenty-four years of age or more, though he be counselled the contrary, for *Often rape rueth* (*haste repents*): I will love him better to be a good secular man than to be a lewd (*stupid*) priest.

And I am sorry that my cousin Berney is sick; and I pray you if my white wine, or any of my waters, or any other thing that I have, that is in your award, may do him comfort, let him have it, for I would be right sorry

if any thing should come to him but good; and for God's sake advise him to do make his will, if it be not done, and to do well to my cousin his wife, and else it were pity; and I pray you to recommend me to her, and to my aunt, and to all the gentlemen and gentlewomen there. And as for John Day, if he be dead I would be sorry, for I know not how to come by my money that he oweth me; and I purpose Peacock shall have less to do for me another year than he hath had, if I may be better purveyed with your help, for he is for himself, but not for me.

And as for any merchants to my corn, I can get none here, therefore I pray you do ye as well therein as ye can. Also I send you, by the bearer hereof, the bill of mine receipts; and if ye go forth with Walter, I pray you come to me as soon as ye may after ye be come home; and me liketh mine abiding and the country here right well, and I trust when summer cometh and fair weather, I shall like it better, for I am cherished here but too well; and I construe your letters into other matters well enough, whereof I thank you, and if it need not to send forth Walter hastily, I would ye might come to me, though ye should come upon one day, and go again on the next day, then should I commune with you in all matters; and I hold best if ye have not the letters that Holler's son should have brought me, that ye send Sym over for them this night, that I may have them to morrow, and if ye may come yourself I would be the better pleased; and I remember that water of mint or water of milfoil were good for my cousin Berney to drink for to make him to brook (*digest*); and if they send to Dame Elizabeth Calthorpe, there ye shall not fail of one or of both; she hath other waters to make folks to brook. God keep you; written on the Monday next after Saint Hilary (13th Jan.).

I have no longer leisure at this time.

MARGARET PASTON.

258. Expenses at Oxford (1478)

To his Worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston, dwelling in Maultby, be this Letter delivered in haste.

Right Reverend and Worshipful Mother, I recommend me unto your good Mothership, beseeching you to give me your daily benediction, desiring heartily to hear of your prosperity, which God preserve to his pleasure and to your heart's desire, &c. I marvel sore that you sent me no word of the letter which I sent to you by Master William Brown at Easter: I sent you word that time that I should send you mine expenses particularly; but as at this time the bearer hereof had a letter suddenly that he should come home, and therefore I could have no leisure to send them you on that wise, and therefore I shall write to you in this letter the whole sum of my expenses since I was with you till Easter last past, and also the receipts, reckoning the 20*s.* that I had of you to Oxon wards with the Bishop's finding.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
The whole sum of receipts is	5	17	6
And the whole sum of expenses is . .	6	5	$5\frac{3}{4}$
And that [which] cometh over the receipts in my expenses, I have borrowed of Master Edmund, and it draweth	0	8	0

and yet I reckon none expenses since Easter, but as for them they be not great, and therefore I beseech you to send me money by Sir Richard Cotman, bringer of this letter, or else by the next messenger that you can have to me.

I beseech you that he that I sent by this letter to you, may have good cheer, if he bring it himself, as he telleth me that he will, for he is a good lover of mine. Master Edmund Alyard recommend him specially to you, and to all my brethren and sisters and to all your household; and I beseech you that I may be recommended to all them also, and specially to my brother

John the younger. No more to you at this time, but Almighty Jesus have you in his keeping. Amen.

Written at Oxonforth on Saint Dunstan's day, and the 19th day of May.

By your son and scholar,

WALTER PASTON.

He had expended £6 5*s.* 5¾*d.* from the time that he had left his mother at Easter last [March 22 in 1478], we may, therefore, conclude the former account was from the Michaelmas preceding, and a moderate one; if so we may fairly estimate his University education at £100 a year of our present money. I mean that £12 10*s.* 11½*d.* would then procure as many necessaries and comforts as £100 will at this day (1785). (F.)

259. WALTER TOO YOUNG FOR CHURCH PREFERMENT (Feb., 1479)

To my Mistress Margaret Paston at Norwich.

MY worshipful Mistress, I recommend me unto you, and thank you of your approved ensured kindness evermore shewed, and so I pray you to continue. I have received your letter and understand your desire, which is against the law for three causes; one is, for your son Walter is not tonsured, in mother tongue called Benett; another cause, he is not twenty-four years of age, which is required compleat. The third, he ought of right to be priest within twelvemonths after that he is parson, without so were he had a dispensation from Rome, by our Holy Father the Pope, which I am certain cannot be had; therefore I present not your desire unto my Lord [W. Goldwell, Bishop of Norwich], lest he would have taken it to a displeasure; or else to take a great simpleness in your desire, which should cause him, in such matters as shall fortune you to speed with him another time, to shew unto you the rigour of the law, which I would be loth; therefore present another man able; ask counsel of Master John Smyth, and cease of your desire in this part, for it is not goodly neither godly; and let not your desire be known, after my advice: be not wroth, though I send unto you thus plainly in the matter, for I would ye did as well, as any woman in Norfolk, that is, with right, to your honour,

prosperity, and to the pleasure of God, with you and all yours, who have you in his blessed keeping. From Hoxne on Candlemas day.

I send you your present again in the box.

WILLIAM PYKENHAM
[Chancellor of Norwich].

But the refusal is remarkably curt, and even threatening, seeing that the gift of a family living to a young relative (to be held by a deputy till he was ready) was extremely common. A cleric named Pickenham, probably this man, was concerned in the litigation over Fastolfe's property. The injunction to secrecy was doubtless for his own security.

260. WALTER MAY TAKE TO THE LAW (1479)

To his worshipful Mistress, Mistress Margaret Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Mistress, I recommend me unto you as lowly as I can, thanking you for your goodness at all times, God grant me to deserve it and do that may please you.

As for your son Walter, his labour and learning hath been, and is, in the faculty of art, and is well sped therein: and [he] may be bachelor at such time as shall like you, and then to go to law (*to study law*), I can think it to his preferring, but it is not good he know it unto the time he shall change; and as I conceive there shall none have that exhibition to the faculty of law, therefore move ye the executors that at such time as he shall leave it, ye may put another in his place, such as shall like you to prefer. If he shall go to law, and be made bachelor of arts before, and ye will have him home this year, then may he be bachelor at Midsummer, and be with you in the vacation and go to law at Michaelmas.

What it shall like you to command me in this or any other, ye shall have mine service ready.

I pray you by the next messenger to send me your intent, that such as shall be necessary may be purveyed in season, and Jesu preserve you. At Oxinforth the 4th day of March.

Your Scholar,
EDMUND ALYARD.

261. WALTER PROCEEDING (TO HIS DEGREE) (May, 1479)

To his Right Reverend Brother Sir John Paston, at Caistor Hall in Norfolk.

AFTER all due reverence, and recommendations, liketh it you to understand that I received a letter from my brother John, whereby I understood that my mother and you would know what the costs of my proceeding should be; I sent a letter to my brother John certifying my costs, and the causes why that I would proceed, but as I have sent word to my mother, I purpose to tarry now till it be Michaelmas, for if I tarry till then, some of my costs shall be paid, for I supposed, when that I sent the letter to my brother John, that the queen's brother [1] [Lionel Woodville] should have proceeded at Midsummer, but he will tarry now till Michaelmas, but as I sent word to my mother, I would be (*have been*) Inceptor before Midsummer, and therefore I beseeched her to send me some money, for it will be some cost to me, but not much.

Sir, I beseech you to send me word what answer ye have of the Bishop of Winchester for that matter which ye spake to him of for me, when I was with you at London: I thought for to have had word thereof ere this time: I would it would come, for our finding of the Bishop of Norwich beginneth to be slack in payment [2]; and if ye know not what this term meaneth "Inceptor," Master Edmund, that was my ruler at Oxford, bearer hereof, can tell you, or else any other graduate.

Also, I pray you send me word what is done with the horse I left at Tottenham, and whether the man be content that I had it of or not. Jesu preserve you to his pleasure, and to your most heart's desire. Written

[1] When a person of royal or very great family took a degree in the University, he bore a part of the expenses of those who become graduates at the same time.

[2] Evidently the Bishop of Norwich was responsible for some Exhibitions which he did not pay punctually. Walter would Incept, as M.A. soon after he had Proceeded as B.A. The term is still used at Cambridge, where the older Pastons had studied.

at Oxford the Saturday next after the Ascension of our Lord.

WALTER PASTON.

262. WALTER'S BACHELOR'S FEAST (June, 1479)

To his right trusty and heartily beloved Brother, John Paston, abiding at the George at Paul's Wharf in London, be this Letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and heartily beloved Brother, I recommend me unto you, desiring faithfully to hear of your prosperity, which God preserve, thanking you of divers letters that you sent me.

In the last letter that you sent to me, ye writ that you should have writ in the letter that you sent by Master Brown, how that I should send you word what time that I should proceed, but there was none such writing in that letter; the letter is yet to show, and if you come to Oxon, ye shall see the letter, and all the letters that you sent me since I came to Oxon.

And also Master Brown had that same time much money in a bag, so that he durst not bring it with him, and that same letter was in that same bag, and he had forgotten to take out the letter, and he sent all together by London, so that it was the next day after that I was made bachelor ere than the letter came, and so the fault was not in me.

And if ye will know what day I was made bachelor, I was made on Friday was sev'night [18th June], and I made my feast on the Monday after [21st June]. I was promised venison against my feast, of my Lady Harcourt, and of another person too, but I was deceived of both; but my guests held them pleased with such meat as they had, blessed be God, who have you in his keeping. Amen.

Written at Oxon, on the Wednesday next after Saint Peter.

WALTER PASTON.

Lady Harcourt, probably widow of Sir Robert Harcourt, K.G., of

Stanton Harcourt. The effigies of this lady on her tomb represents her with the garter on her left arm, which proves that in former times the ladies of these knights were honoured by wearing this badge of their husband's knighthood; a distinction which ought to be re-established for the honour of the order and the ornament of the fair.

A branch of the Harcourt family having intermarried with the Stapeltons, accounts for Walter Paston's expectations from the Lady Harcourt. (F.)

263. Death of Walter and his Grandmother of the Pestilence, and Anne Yelverton's Infant (Aug., 1479)

SURE tidings are come to Norwich that my Grandam is deceased, whom God assoil: my Uncle had a messenger yesterday that she should not escape, and this day came another, at such time as we were at mass for my brother Walter, whom God assoil! My Uncle was coming to have offered, but the last messenger returned him hastily, so that he took his horse incontinent to inform more of our heaviness.

My Sister is delivered, and the child passed to God, who send us of his grace.

Docking told me secretly that, for any haste (*in spite of his haste*) my Uncle [William] should ride by my Lady of Norfolk to have a threescore persons, whether it is to convey my Grandam hither or not he could not say: I deem it is rather to put them in possession of some of her lands.

Written the Saturday the 21st of August, in the 19th year of Edward IV.

EDMUND TO JOHN.

Walter Paston died soon after his return from Oxford, in the town residence of the Pastons, called Paston's Place, in the parish of St. Peter's at Hungate, in the city of Norwich, and was buried in the church there before the image of St. John the Baptist. (F.)

264. The Account of John Paston, Esq.

	£	s.	d.
RECEIVED at Cressingham the Thursday after Saint Edmund [25th Nov., 1749. 19 E. IV.] at the court there, by the hands of me John Paston, Esq.	5	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Whereof paid to my mother, For costs done upon the burying of Walter Paston, and while he lay sick; And for the hire of a man coming with the said Walter from Oxon, 20*d.* . . .	1	9	11
Item, paid to William Gibson for one horse, saddle and bridle lent to Walter Paston by the said William	0	16	0
Item, given the said man coming from Oxon with the said Walter, by the hands of John Paston	0	1	8
Item, paid for divers things while Walter Paston lay sick	0	0	4
Item, for the costs of John Paston riding to keep the court at Cressingham anno supradicto, which was four days in doing, for the steward might not be there at the day prefixed	0	3	4
Total paid . .	2	11	3

265. WILLIAM AT ETON (Nov., 1478)

To his worshipful Brother John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful brother, I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare and prosperity, letting you weet that I have received of Alweder a letter and a noble in gold therein; furthermore my creanser (*creditor*) Master Thomas [Stevenson] heartily recommended him to you, and he prayeth you to send him some money for my commons, for he saith ye be 20*s.* in his debt, for a month was to pay for, when he had money last; also I beseech you to send me a hose cloth, one for the holydays of some colour, and another for the working days how coarse soever it be it maketh no matter, and a stomacher (*a sort of ruff*), and two shirts, and a pair of slippers: and if it like you that

I may come with Alweder by water, and sport me with you at London a day or two this term time, then ye may let all this be till the time that I come, and then I will tell you when I shall be ready to come from Eton by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping. Written the Saturday next after Allhallows day with the hand of your brother,

WILLIAM PASTON.

266. THE SAME: LATIN AND LOVE (Feb. 23, 1479)

To his Worshipful Brother, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Brother, after all duties of recommendation, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, which I pray God long to continue to his pleasure, and to your heart's desire; letting you weet that I received a letter from you, in the which Letter was 8*d.* with the which I should buy a pair of slippers.

Farthermore certifying you as for the 13*s.* 4*d.* which ye sent by a Gentleman's man, for my board, called Thomas Newton, was delivered to mine Hostess, and so to my Creansor (*Creditor*) Mr. Thomas Stevenson; and he heartily recommended him to you; also ye sent me word in the letter of 12*lb.* of Figgs and 8*lb.* of Raisins, I have them not delivered, but I doubt not I shall have, for Alweder told me of them, and he said, that they came after in another Barge.

And as for the young Gentlewoman, I will certify you how I first fell in acquaintance with her; her father is dead, there be two sisters of them, the elder is just wedded; at which wedding I was with mine hostess, and also desired (*invited*) by the Gentleman himself, called William Swan, whose dwelling is in Eton. So it fortuned that mine hostess reported on me otherwise than I was worthy; so that her Mother commanded her to make me good Cheer; and so in good faith she did; she is not abiding where she is now, her dwelling is in

London; but her Mother and she came to a place of hers five miles from Eton, where the wedding was, for because it was nigh to the Gentleman, which wedded her Daughter; and on Monday next coming, that is to say, the first Monday of clean Lent, her Mother and she will go to the Pardon at Sheene [Richmond], and so forth to London, and there to abide in a place of hers in Bow Church-Yard; and if it please you to enquire of her, her Mother's name is Mistress Alborow, the name of the Daughter is Margaret Alborow, the age of her is, by all likelyhood, 18 or 19 years at the farthest; and as for the money and plate it is ready whensoever she were wedded; but as for the Livelihood (*property*), I trow not till after her mother's decease, but I cannot tell you for very certain, but you may know by enquiring.

And as for her Beauty, judge you that, when you see her, if so be that ye take the labour; and specially behold her hands, for and if it be, as it is told me, she is disposed to be thick.

And as for my coming from Eton, I lack nothing but versifying, which I trust to have with a little continuance.

Quœritur, Quomodo nonvalet hora, valet mora? Unde dicitur?

> Arbore jam videas exemplum. Non die possunt
> Omnia suppleri; sed tamen illa mora.
>
> [G.'s version.]

And these two verses aforesaid be of mine own making.

No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Written at Eton the even of Saint Mathias the Apostle, in haste, with the hand of your Brother.

WILLIAM PASTON, Junior.

267. Edmund to marry the Widow Clippesby. The Pestilence (1479)

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

[Abridged.]

Sir, after all duties of recommendation, please it [you] to understand, that, according to your letter sent me by Wilson, Lomner and I met at Norwich and drew out a formable bill out of yours, and sent it again to the Escheator Palmer by my brother Edmund, which had another errand into that country to speak with H. Spilman, to get his good will towards the bargain like to be finished hastily betwixt Mistress Clippesby and him.

And, Sir, at the delivery of the Bill of Inquisition to the Escheator, my brother Edmund told him that according to your writing to me, I spake with mine uncle William [about Agnes Paston's estates]; wherefore ye had need to beware that the Escheator skips not from you, when he cometh to London, and certify it, ere ye speak with him.

The Escheator shall be at London by Tuesday or Wednesday next coming, at John Lewis's house, for he shall ride forwards as on Monday next coming betimes.

Sir, your tenants at Cromer say that they know not who shall be their lord, they marvel that ye nor no man for you hath not yet been there. . . .

Also, Sir, ye must of right, considering my brother Edmund's diligence in your matters, since your departing, help him forwards to mine uncle Sir George Brown, as my brother Edmund prayed you in his letter that he sent unto you by Mond's son of Norwich, dwelling with Thomas Jenney, that mine uncle Sir George may get to my brother Edmund of the king the wardship of John Clippesby, son and heir to [William] Clippesby, late of Oby, in the county of Norfolk, esquire, during the nonage (*childhood*) of my lord and lady of York, though it cost four or five marks (2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* or 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) the suit;

let mine uncle Sir George be clerk of the hanaper, and keep the patent, if it be granted, till he have his money, and that shall not be long to. Mine uncle Sir George may inform the king for truth, that the child shall have no land during his young mother's life, and there is no man here that will marry with him without they have some land with him, and so the gift shall not be great that the king should give him; and yet I trow he [Edmund] should get the mother by that mean; and in my conceit the king doth but right if he grant my brother Edmund, Clippesby's son in recompense for taking my brother Edmund's son, otherwise called Dyxson's, the child's father being alive; Dyxson is dead, God have his soul, whom I beseech to send you your most desired joy.

Written at Norwich on Saint Leonard's day (6th November).

JOHN PASTON.

[The Escheator was the officer who took the king's dues on a land-owner's death. The Clerk of the Hanaper registered and kept grants and patents. The wardship of little Clippesby belonged to the Duke of Norfolk—Richard, Duke of York, Edward IV.'s younger son, married to the little Mowbray heiress: the king would exercise his son's rights while the latter was a minor. The sale of the marriage was the most profitable part of a wardship.]

Sir, it is told me that Nicholas Barley the squire hath taken an action of debt against me this term, I pray you let Wheatley or somebody speak with him, and let him weet that if he sue me softly this term, that he shall be paid ere the next term be at an end; it is about six pounds, and in faith he should have had it ere this time and our threshers of Swainsthorp had not died upon [me], and if I might have paid it him a year ago, as well as I trust I shall soon after Christmas, I would not for twelve pounds have broken him so many promises as I have.

Also, Sir, I pray you send me by the next man that cometh from London two pots of treacle of Genoa, they shall cost 16*d.* for I have spent out that I had with my young wife, and my young folks, and myself; and I shall

pay him that shall bring them to me, and for his carriage; I pray you let it be sped.

The people dieth sore in Norwich, and specially about my house, but my wife and my women come not out, and flee farther we cannot, for at Swainsthorp, since my departing thence, they have died, and been sick nigh in every house of the town.

Sir John himself died November 15th, shortly after receiving this letter.

268. EDMUND MARRIED TO THE WIDOW CLIPPESBY [1480?]

To my Right Worshipful and especial good Mother, Margaret Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and most especial good mother, in my most humble wise, with all my duty and service, I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your blessing, which is to me most joy of earthly thing; and it please you to be so good and kind, mother, to me, to forgive me, and also my wife, of our lewd (*rude*) offence, that we have not done our duty, which was to have seen you and have waited upon you ere now. My huswife trusteth to lay to you her houswifry for her excuse, which I must beseech you not to accept, for in good faith, I deem her mind hath been otherwise occupied than as to houswifry, which seemeth well by the lacheness (*negligence*) of the tilth of her lands. I beseech God, for the furtherance of them as now reward you, and the good parson of Maultby and also Master Baily, who I weened would not have baulked this poor lodging to Norwich ward.

I understand by the bringer hereof that ye intend to ride to Walsingham, if it please you that I may weet the season, as my duty is, I shall be ready to await upon you.

Please it you, that the bringer hereof came to me for 10*s.* 8*d.* which I should owe his father; true it was at my last departing from him, I owed him so much, but

certainly ere I came at Thetford homewards, I thought of conscience he ought to have restored me as much; I had my horses with him at livery, and among all, one of them was put to grass and to labour, so that he died of a lax by the way; I paid for hard meat ever to him.

Please it you to deliver Katharine 5*s.* which I send you in this bill. I am not ascertained how she is purveyed of money towards her journey. If her father could not have claimed one penny of me, I would not see her dispurveyed (*unprovided*) if I might, nor the poorest child that is belonging to his lodging.

Mother, my wife is bold to send you a token; I beseech you pardon all things not done according to duty. I beseech God send you the accomplishment of your most worshipful desires. At Oby, the Saturday next before Candlemas.

Your humble Son
and Servant,
EDMUND PASTON.

269. EDMUND HOPES TO SETTLE WILLIAM [1481?]

To my Brother William Paston be this delivered.

I HEARTILY recommend me to you; here is lately fallen a widow in Worsted, which was wife to one Bolt, a worsted merchant, and worth a thousand pound, and gave to his wife an hundred marks in money, stuff of household, and plate to the value of an hundred marks, and ten pounds by the year in land; she is called a fair gentlewoman. I will for your sake see her. She is right sister, of father and mother, to Harry Ingloss; I purpose to speak with him to get his good will. The gentlewoman is about thirty years, and has but two children, which shall be at the dead's charge; she was his wife but five years; if she be any better than I write for, take it in woothe I shew the least; thus let me have knowledge of your mind as shortly as you can, and when

ye shall mowe (*be able to*) be in this country, and thus God send you good health and good adventure.

From Norwich, the Saturday after twelfth day.

Your

EDMUND PASTON.

William does not appear ever to have married. Edmund afterwards served Oxford.

270. ANNE'S BOARDING [1470?]

To John Paston, the younger, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that since ye departed my Cousin Calthorpe sent me a letter complaining in his writing that for as much as he cannot be paid of his tenants as he hath been before this time, he proposes to lessen his household, and to live the straitlier, wherefore he desireth me to purvey for your sister Anne, he saith she waxeth high, and it were time to purvey her a marriage; I marvel what causeth him to write so now, either she hath displeased him or else he hath taken her with some default; therefore I pray you commune with my cousin Clere at London, and weet how he is disposed to her ward, and send me word, for I shall be fain to send for her, and with me she shall but lose her time, and without she will be the better occupied she shall oftentimes move me and put me in great inquietness; remember what labour I had with your sister [Margery], therefore do your part to help her forth, that may be to your worship and mine.

Item, remember the bill that I spake to you of to get of your Brother of such money as he hath received of me since your Father's decease; see your Uncle Maultby if ye may, and send me some tidings as soon as ye may; God keep you. Written the Friday next before Saint Thomas of Canterbury (29 *December*), in haste.

By your Mother

MARGARET PASTON.

Anne seems to have been kept at home and to have fallen in love with Pampyng, one of the principal servants, but this affair was nipped in the bud.

PART XV

PUBLIC EVENTS AND THEIR EFFECTS (D)
RICHARD III. AND HENRY VII.
1483–1506

SUMMARY OF EVENTS, 1483-1506

1483. April–June. Richard D. of Gloucester seizes power and drives away the Woodvilles and Greys. Hastings beheaded.
June. Richard III. crowned. Buckingham rebels and is beheaded.
1485. Aug. Henry Earl of Richmond lands, with Oxford, in Wales, battle of Bosworth. Henry VII. crowned.
1486. Lord Lovel attempts a rising.
1487. Lambert Simnel lands in Lancashire, is defeated and taken at Stoke-on-Trent, near Newark. Court of Star Chamber begins.
1489. Henry sends troops to Brittany to make feint of war on Louis XI
Rising in Yorkshire against taxation.
1492–9 Conspiracies and risings for Perkin Warbeck. Birth of Prince Henry. Knights of the Bath.
1506. Archduke Philip (grandson of Charles the Bold) wrecked off English coast, received by Henry VII. and makes a Treaty.

PART XV

271. Duchess of Suffolk without a London Lodging (probably early in 1483)

Unto John Paston, in haste.

Master Paston, I pray you, that it may please you to leave your Lodging for three or four days, till I may be purveyed of another, and I shall do as much to your pleasure; for God's sake, say me not nay, and I pray you recommend me to my Lord Chamberlain. [Hastings.]

Your Friend Elizabeth.

The Seal is octangular, the impression a Rose (F.) (the royal cognizance).

272. The Accession of Richard III. provokes Insurrections (1483)

To my right well beloved Friend John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right well beloved Friend, I commend me to you. It is so that the Kentishmen be up in the Weald, and say that they will come and rob the City, which I shall let (*prevent*) if I may.

Therefore I pray you, that, with all diligence, ye make you ready and come hither, and bring with you six tall fellows in harness; and ye shall not lose your labour, that knoweth God, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the 10th day of October.

Your Friend,

J. Norfolk.

John, Lord Howard, was created Duke of Norfolk in 1483, 1 R. III. and was slain at the battle of Bosworth, in 1485.

273. Proclamation of Richard III. against Henry Tudor

Richard R.

Richard, &c. wisheth health, we command you, &c. Forasmuch as the King, our Sovereign Lord, hath certain knowledge that Piers (Courtney), Bishop of Exeter, Jasper Tydder (*Tudor*), Son of Owen Tydder, calling himself Earl of Pembroke, John, late Earl of Oxford, and Sir Edward Wodevile, with others diverse, his Rebels and Traytors, disabled and attainted by the authority of the High Court of Parliament, of whom many be known for open Murderers, Advowterers (*Adulterers*), and Extortioners, contrary to the pleasure of God, and against all truth, honour and nature, have forsaken their natural country, taking them first to be under the obeysance of the Duke of Bretagne, and to him promised certain things, which by him and his Council, were thought things too greatly unnatural and abominable, for them to grant, observe, keep, and perform, and therefore the same utterly refused.

The said Traitors seeing the said Duke and his Council would not aid nor succour them nor follow their ways, privily departed out of his Country into France, and there taking them to be under the obeysance of the King's ancient Enemy, Charles, calling himself King of France, and to abuse and blind the Commons of this said Realm, the said Rebels and Traytors have chosen to be their Captain one Henry Tydder, Son of Edmund Tydder, son of Owen Tydder, which of his ambitious and insatiable covetise encroacheth and usurpeth upon him, the name and title of Royal Estate of this realm of England ; whereunto he hath no manner of interest, right, title or colour, as every man well knoweth ; for he is descended of bastard blood, both of father's side, and of mother's side ; for the said Owen the Grandfather, was bastard born ; and his mother was daughter unto John, Duke of Somerset, son unto John, Earl of Somerset, son unto Dame Catherine Swynford, and of their indubitable Avoutry gotten ; whereby it evidently

appeareth, that no title can nor may in him, which fully intendeth to enter this realm, proposing a conquest; and if he should atchieve his false intent and purpose, every man's life, livelihood, and goods, shall be in his hands, liberty, and disposition; whereby should ensue the disheriting and destruction of all the noble and worshipful blood of this realm for ever.

And to the resistance and withstanding whereof every true and natural Englishman born, must lay to his hands for his own surety and weel.

And to the intent that the said Henry Tydder might the rather atchieve his false intent and purpose by the aid, support, and assistance of the King's ancient enemy of France, [he] hath covenanted and bargained with him, and all the Council of France, to give up and release in perpetuity all the right, title, and claim, that the King of England have had, and ought to have, to the Crown and Realm of France, together with the Duchies of Normandy, Anjou and Mayne, Gascoign and Guysnes, Cassell, and the towns of Calais, Guysnes, Hammes, with the Marches appertaining to the same, and exclude the Arms of France out of the Arms of England for ever. . . . [etc.].

The King our Sovereign Lord willeth, chargeth, and commandeth, all and every of the natural and true subjects of this his Realm, to call the premises to their minds, and like good and true Englishmen to endow themselves with all their powers for the defence of them, their wives, children, and goods, and hereditaments, against the said malicious purposes and conspirations, which the said ancient enemies have made with the King's said Rebels and Traitors, for the final destruction of this land, as is aforesaid.

And our said Sovereign Lord, as a well willed, diligent, and courageous Prince, will put his most royal person to all labour and pain necessary in this behalf, for the resistance and subduing of his said enemies, rebels, and traytors, to the most comfort, weel, and surety of all his true and faithful liege men and subjects.

And over this, our said Sovereign Lord willeth and

commandeth all his said Subjects, to be ready in their most defensible array, to do his Highness service of war, when they by open proclamation, or otherwise shall be commanded so to do, for resistance of the King's said Rebels, Traitors, and enemies.

Witness myself at Westminster, the 23d day of June, in the second year of our Reign.

274. Before Bosworth (August, 1485)

To my well-beloved Friend John Paston, be this bill delivered in haste.

Well beloved Friend, I commend me to you, letting you to understand that the King's Enemies be a-land, and that the King would have set forth as upon Monday, but only for our Lady Day [Aug. 15]; but for certain he goeth forward as upon Tuesday, for a Servant of mine brought to me the certainty.

Wherefore I pray you, that ye meet with me at Bury [St. Edmunds],[1] for, by the Grace of God, I purpose to lie at Bury as upon Tuesday night; and that ye bring with you such Company of tall men as ye may goodly make at my cost and charge, besides that which ye have promised the King; and, I pray you, ordain them Jackets of my Livery, and I shall content you at your meeting with me.

Your Lover,
J. Norfolk.

275. King Henry's Instructions to capture Lord Lovel (1486)

To my right trusty and well beloved John Paston, Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.

Right trusty and well beloved, I recommend me unto you; and forasmuch as I am credibly informed, that

[1] John Paston does not seem to have obeyed this summons.

Francis, late Lord Lovell, is now of late resorted into the Isle of Ely, to the intent by all likelihood, to find the ways and means to get him shipping and passage in your coasts, or else to resort again to Sanctuary, if he can or may.

I therefore heartily desire and pray you, and nevertheless, in the King's name, straitly charge you, that ye in all goodly haste endeavour yourself, that such watch, or other means be used and had in the Ports, and Creeks, and other places, where ye think necessary by your discretion, to the letting of his said purpose; and that ye also use all the ways ye can or may by your wisdom, to the taking of the same late Lord Lovell; and what pleasure ye may do to the King's Grace in this matter, I am sure is not to you unknown; and God keep you.

Written at Lavenham, the 19th day of May.

MARGARET OXYNFORD.

Lord Lovel, however, escaped all pursuit, and got safe to the Duchess of Burgundy, by whose persuasion he afterwards joined in the plot of Lambert Simnel, and attending him to England, was killed at the battle of Stoke, in 1487. (F.) He had been Chamberlain and favourite of Richard III., *cf.* the rhyme, "The Cat, the Rat, and Lovel our dog, etc." He is said to have fled from the battlefield to Minster Lovel, Oxon., and there to have died, of starvation, in an unsuspected secret chamber.

276. JOHN PASTON ADVISED TO SHOW HIS LOYALTY DURING LAMBERT SIMNEL'S RISING (1487)

Unto my Right Worshipful Cousin, John Paston, Esquire, for the body (to the King's Majesty, prout patet alibi per ejus literam).

RIGHT worshipful Cousin, I recommend me unto you as heartily as I can, letting you weet I was with my Lord Steward [J. Ratcliffe, Lord Fitzwalter], as on Monday last past, by the desire of them that I might not say nay to; I heard all that was said there, but they got none advantage, word, nor promise of me, but they thought, in as much as they were the best in the shire, that every man ought to wait and go with them; whereto

it was answered, that our master, next the King [Earl of Oxford] having his commission, must needs have the gentlemen and the country to await upon him by the vertue of the same; but it was thought I ought not to obey no copy of the commission, without I had the same under wax (*i.e.* Seal), wherein hath been great argument, which I understood by report a fortnight past; and that caused me to send unto my Lord to have the very commission, which he sent me, and a letter, whereof I send you the copy herein closed.

As for you, ye be sore taken in some place, saying that ye intend such things as is like to follow great mischief; I said I understood none such, nor things like it; and it is thought ye intend not to go forth this journey, nor no gentleman in that quarter but Robert Brandon, that hath promised to go with them, as they say.

I understand Sir William Boleyn and Sir Harry Heydon were at Thetford into Kent ward, but they returned into Norfolk again; I think they will not go this journey, if the King need. Sir Harry was at Attleborough on Saturday; I ween he had advice there to turn again; wherefore, Cousin, it is good to understand the certainty what gentlemen intend to go; and be assured to go together, that I may have word; my Cousin Hopton hath promised that he will be one. As for Wiseman, he saith he will be of the same, but I can have no hold. Furthermore, Cousin, it is said, that after my Lord's departing to the King ye were at Barkway, which is construed that ye had been with the Lady Lovel, but wrath said never well; and inasmuch as we understand my Lord's [Oxford's] pleasure, it is well done [that] we deal wisely thereafter. And, next to the King, I answered plainly, I was bound to do him service, and to fulfil his commandment to the utmost of my power, by the grace of God, who ever preserve you to his pleasure. Written at Oxburgh, the 16th day of May.

Your Cousin,

EDMUND BEDINGFELD.[1]

[1] Bedingfield and John Paston were knighted after Stokefield. M waited for the result before joining the Kings's muster.

277. The Earl of Oxford satisfied

The Earl of Oxford to Sir Edmund Bedingfeld.

[The enclosed Letter.]

Whereas I understand by your late writing unto me that ye have right well endeavoured you to the execution of the King's commission and commandment, in preparing yourself with the gentlemen, and other of the country, to be ready to do the King service, which I have showed unto the King's Highness, so that his Grace is right well content, and right thankfully accepteth the same, understanding the right good minds and disposition of you, and of other gentlemen there towards his Grace; howbeit his Highness will not as yet put you to any further labour or charge for so much as his rebels and enemies (Simnel) be into Ireland; nevertheless his Grace will that the country be ready at all times to do his Highness service upon reasonable warning, for so much as the King's Grace intendeth to make provision to send an army into Ireland in haste, not knowing as yet whether that ye, and other about you, shall be desired to bear any charge thereto or no. And whereas it is marvelled that ye had not the King's Commission, under his Great Seal, I send it to you with this my writing, willing you not to proceed farther to any execution thereof till such time as ye have otherwise in commandment, alway thanking heartily the gentlemen, and all other, for their good wills towards me.

278. English help for Brittany against France: Ruse to take a French Ship (1488)

To Sir John Paston be this Letter delivered.

After all due recommendation, please it you understand that my Lord [Oxford] hath been with the King in Windsor at St. George's Feast; and there at the same feast were both the Embassadors of Bretaigne and of Flanders, as well from the King of [the] Romans as from

the young Duke [Maximilian I. and his son Philip]; but I cannot show you the certain whether we shall have with them war or peace; but I understand for certain that all such Captains as went to the sea in Lent, that is to say, Sir Charles Somerset, Sir Richard Hawte, and Sir William Vampage maketh them ready to go to the sea again, as shortly as they can; to what intent I cannot say.

Also, whereas it was said that my Lord Wodevile (*i.e.* Sir Edward) and other should have gone over into Bretaigne, to have aided the Duke of Bretaigne, I cannot tell of none such aid; but upon that saying there came many men to Southampton, where it was said that he should have taken shipping, to have waited upon him over; and so when he was countermanded, those that resorted thither, to have gone over with him, tarried there still, in hope that they should heve been licensed to have gone over; and when they saw no likelihood that they should have license, there was 200 of them that got them into a Bretaigne ship, the which was late come over with salt, and bad the master set them a land (*on land*) in Bretaigne; and they had not sailed not past five leagues but they espied a Frenchman; and the Frenchman made over to them; and they fared as though they would not have meddled with them, and all the Englishmen went under the hatches, so that they showed no more but those that came to Southampton with the ship, to cause the Frenchmen to be the more glad to meddle with them; and so the Frenchman boarded them, and then they that were under the hatches came up, and so took the Frenchmen, and carried the men, ship and all, into Bretaigne.

Also, there was there an ambassador from the King of Scots [James III.] who is now put in great trouble by his son, and other of the lords of his land.

Sir, as I came homeward by London, I spake there with Edmond Dormand, and he said that he had written unto you, but he had none answer; wherefore he prayed me that, if I knew any man coming towards Norwich, and (*that*) I would write unto you, that he feareth, if ye

see none other direction, that he shall be committed to the Fleet.

Also, he showed me that Harry Wyot would find the mean to have you condemned, and recover the obligation of 40*l.* against you; and so he saith he wote not how to do, for he is half dismayed; he feareth lest he shall never come home; but he intendeth to plead the obligation fulfilled at Norwich, for he saith there is no other remedy to save you from the condemnation, till that he heareth otherwise from you, which he thinketh long after.

Written at Hedyngham, the 13th day of May, with the hand of your brother.

WILLIAM PASTON.

Philip, son of Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy, was now Duke of Burgundy (including Flanders). Maximilian professed to help Brittany against Charles VIII. of France. William was in Oxford's household.

279. THE KING'S LETTER TO THE EARL OF OXFORD (1489)

The King to my Lord of Oxenford.

"RIGHT trusty and entirely beloved Cousin, we greet you well; inasmuch as it hath liked God to send us good tidings out of Bretaigne, such as we doubt not but that ye be desirous to understand; we write unto you of them, as they be come to our knowledge, and as followeth.

"The Lord Malpertuis, now late with us in ambassade from our dear Cousin the Duchess of Bretaigne, shipped at our port of Dartmouth, and arrived at St. Paul de Lyon in Bretaigne, on Palm Sunday [12th April], at 4 in the afternoon, from whence he wrote us the disposition and the state of the country there, and of the landing and the demeaning of our army.

"We received his writing on Monday last at evensong time; and because he was of Bretaigne born, and favourable to that party, we ne gave (*did not give*) such trust

to his tidings, as was thought to us surety to write to you thereupon.

"This day after high mass cometh unto us from out of Bretaigne aforesaid, and with a new ambassade from our said Cousin, Falcon one of our Pursuivants, that ratifieth the news of the said Lord Malpertuis, which be these.

"After the garrison of Frenchmen in the town of Gyngham (*Guingamp*) had certainty of the landing of our army, they drew down the Fauxbourgs of Gyngham, and made them meet to defend a siege; but as soon as they understood that our said army journeyed towards them, they left the same Gyngham, where our said army arrived the Thursday next before Palm Sunday, and was received with procession, lodged and received, and refreshed in the town four days; and going towards the said Duchess, they must pass to the castle and borough of Monconter; in that castle was also a garrison of Frenchmen, which incontinently, upon word that our said army drew towards them, the Frenchmen did cast down great part of the walls and fled from thence; in that castle and borough our said army kept their Easter. The castle of Chauson, adjoining near to the town of Saint Brieu was also garrisoned with Frenchmen, that castle they set on fire, and so fled. The towns of Hennebone and Vannes were garrisoned with Frenchmen, which brake down the walls of the towns, and put themselves to flight. The inhabitants about Brest have laid siege thereunto, and gotten the Base Court of [the Castle courtyard from] the Frenchmen ere the departing of our said Pursuivant. The garrison of the town of Concarnell, which is one of the greatest strengths of all Bretaigne, was besieged in like wise, and driven to that necessity, that they within offered, ere his said departing, to avoid the town with staff in hand; how that is taken, or what is more done since, we cannot tell.

"Our said Cousin, the Duchess, is in her city of Rennes; our right trusty Knight and Counsellor, Sir Richard Edgcombe, [is] there also, having chief rule about her; and the Marshal of Bretaigne a-readieth him to join with them in all haste with a good band of men.

Many noblemen of that country repair to our said army to take their party.

"These premisses in substance we have by writing, as well from the chief Captains of our said army, as from our Comptroller aforesaid. And that our said army, blessed be God! hath among themselves kept such love and accord, that no manner of fray or debate hath been between them since the time of their departing out [of] this our realm.

"Given under our signet, at our Castle of Hertford, the 22d day of April."

Sir, this is the copy of the letter that the King sent to my Lord of Oxenford of tidings out of Bretaigne.

By your brother,
WILLIAM PASTON.

280. HENRY VII. EXPECTED IN THE EASTERN COUNTIES: SOUTH AGAINST NORTH (March, 1489)

To his Brother Sir John Paston, Knight, be this Letter delivered.

SIR, I recommend me unto you, letting you weet that (*Here follows some Account relative to a Grant from the Crown, &c.*).

As for my Lord Treasurer he was not with the King of all the council time, the which was ended on the 3d day of March. And thither came my Lord of Northumberland, the first day of March, and departed the even afore the making of this letter; and hath endented with the King for the keeping out of the Scotts, and warring on them; and [he] shall have large money, I cannot tell the Sum for certain.

Also there is a Rover taken at Bristol, one Cowper, as I ween, and he is like to be hanged, and he confesseth more of his Fellows. Also Edward Heestowe of Dover is apeached of Treason of many strange points; and his accuser and he were both afore the King, and then they were taken apart; and he himself confessed it, that his accuser accused him of, and many other things more than he was accused of.

And he had many Lords and Gentlemen to answer for his truth, and his demeaning afore time, for as I heard say, both the King in a manner, nor none of the other Lords, nor Gentlemen, believed not his accuser, till that he confessed it himself, and so he is in the Tower, and like to be dead.

As for the King's coming into the Country, on Monday come fortnight he will lie at the Abbey of Stratford, and so to Chelmsford; then to Sir Thomas Montgomery's; then to Hedingham; then to Colchester; then to Ipswich; then to Bury; then to Dame Anne Wingfield's, and so to Norwich; and there will he be on Palm Sunday Even; and so tarry there all Easter, and then to Walsingham; wherefore ye had need to warn William Gogney and his Fellows to purvey them of wine enough, for every man beareth me on hand, that the Town shall be drunk dry, as York was when the King was there.

Sir, Master Sampson recommend him unto you, and he hath sent you a Ring by Edmond Dorman; and besides that, he required me to write unto you, that it were best for you to purvey you of some Gentlemeny Things against the King's coming, for sure he will bring you Guests enough, and therefore purvey you thereafter. Also, he sendeth you word, that it is my Lord's mind, that my Sister, with all other goodly Folks there about, should accompany with Dame Elisabeth Calthrop, because there is no great Lady there about, against the King's coming; for my Lord [Oxford] hath made great boast of the fair and good Gentlewomen of the Country; and so the King said, he would see them sure.

Sir, my Lord hath sent unto the most part of the Gentlemen of Essex to wait upon him at Chelmsford, where, as he intendeth, to meet with the King, and that they be well appointed, that the Lancashire men may see, that there be Gentlemen of so great substance that they be able to buy all Lancashire.[1] Men think that ye among you will do the same.

[1] Norfolk and Suffolk were now freed from, or destitute of, their once

Your Country is greatly boasted of, also the Inhabitors of the same. I beseech you to remember my horse that you promised me. God keep you.

Written at Sheen in haste, the 7th day of March, with the hand of your Brother.

WILLIAM PASTON.

281. THE EARL OF OXFORD WANTS WINE AND RETAINERS (May, 1489)

To my right worshipful and my well-beloved Counsellor, Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful and right well-beloved Counsellor, I recommend me to you. And whereas I understand by your writing that a great ship is perished with you in those parts, and that ye have been greatly occupied about the saving of the goods of the same; and that the merchants thereof be disposed to put their wines to sale, of the which ye may buy a ton for one hundred shillings and little more. I may buy in this country for four pounds; wherefore if ye may buy there any better cheap, I pray you to purvey for me, such as ye seem necessary.

And forasmuch as ye may not be here with me at this time, I desire and pray you to prepare and ordain yourself with as many men in harness as ye goodly may, to do the King service in my company, at the King's charge and costs, so as ye and they may be with me at Cambridge upon Tuesday next coming; and that ye fail not hereof, as my right special trust is in you.

Written at my castle of Hedingham, this 6th day of May.

OXENFORD.

great Dukes. Oxford's strength lay in Essex and his influence was exerted over East Anglia. A strong supporter of Henry VII. he might feel some resentment of the Stanleys, whose power lay in Lancashire, as men who had profited by Yorkist favour and joined Henry at the last moment.

282. Warning that the Earl and the King will not accept Excuses (1489)

To his Brother Sir John Paston.

Sir, I recommend me unto you, and whereas ye desire that I should send you word of such tidings as Philip Lewes and Windsor bringeth from the court; they be come thence both, but we hear of no tidings that they bring, but that yonder folks abide still about the place whereas this unhappy deed[1] was done, and not with no great number, they say not with past 5 or 600, when they were most; however they have made proclamations in the country, to meet with other of their affinity, as on Tuesday last past, as it appeareth in the copy of their proclamation hereafter following.

Also they show the King intendeth to hold over his journey, and Philip Lewes is ridden again to the King, and shall bring with him money for all their wages that shall be in my Lord's retinue, as you and six of Sir William Bolein's servants and other.

Sir, Master Clopton saw your letter, [for an excuse] and a saith he knew my lord's mind such, that he durst not move him with it. There was Sir William Say, (but Clopton would not it should be known of none other but yourself); he sent my lord, by a servant of his, 40*l.* to have excused him, and it would not be taken, and that I marvel of. Howbeit he brake thus far to my lord: he asked him how many he appointed you to bring with you; and he answered him twenty; and then he showed him your charges that ye have had; my lord said ye might have men enough, and their wages shall be paid for.

Clopton answered, how that it would cost you large money beside their wages to horse them and harness them; and how that, to say the truth, ye were not well at ease.

Notwithstanding all this, my lord willed that ye should

[1] The murder of the Earl of Northumberland by Yorkshiremen who rebelled upon the levy of the tax voted by Parliament, May, 1489.

come to him to Cambridge on Tuesday at night with as many as ye might, and ye and he should do well enough. So Clopton thinketh that, and ye bring a dozen with you it is sufficient; howbeit that Sir Edmund Bedingfield, Sir Thomas Tyrell,[1] and Sir Richard Lewes have been with my lord, and each of them have offered to meet with my lord at Cambridge with thirty men apiece of them; so I would not ye should be so far under them; wherefore I think best that ye purvey you so as and ye should go forth yourself, for I can perceive none otherwise. My bedfellow Cornwallis [2] is married in the north, and he came as yesternight strait out of the country, and he saith none otherwise, but as I have written here before in this letter.

Ye shall have for yourself and for each of your servants horsed and harnessed 20 shillings in hand at Cambridge for a month, and I trust we shall have done ere twenty days to an end, with the grace of God, who have you in keeping. At Hedyngham.

By your brother.

WILLIAM PASTON.

283. THE REBELS' PROCLAMATION

To be known to all the north parts of England, to every lord, knight, esquire, gentleman, and yeoman, that they shall be ready in their defensible array, in the east part, on Tuesday next coming, on Alderton Moor, and in the west part on Cately Moor the same day, upon pain of losing of their goods and bodies; for to gainstand such persons as are about for to destroy our sovereign Lord the King and the Commons of England, for such unlawful points as Saint Thomas of Canterbury

[1] Possibly Sir Thomas, younger brother to Sir James Tyrell, the supposed murderer of Edward V. and his brother the Duke of York, but perhaps a gentleman of Essex.

[2] This was most probably William Cornwallis, Esq. The term "bedfellow" was often used in this age by one friend speaking of another, as persons of the highest quality in the days here spoken of frequently slept together. (F.)

died for. And this to be fulfilled and kept by every ilke commoner upon pain of death.

And this in the name of Master HOBBE HYRSTE, ROBIN GOOD FELLOW'S brother, he is, as I trow.

284. SMUGGLING AND PIRACY FORBIDDEN (1491)

The King to the Earl of Oxenford.

HENRY R.

RIGHT trusty and right well-beloved Cousin, we greet you well, &c. In that ye desire all the Doggers[1] of those parts should have our license to depart in the voyage towards Iceland, as they have been accustomed to do yearly in time past, and that ye will undertake they shall have with them no more quantities of grains than will only suffice for their victualling and expenses.

We let you weet that our full entirely beloved Cousin, the King of Denmark, hath showed and complained unto us by divers his letters, that when our subjects come to the said Iceland, being in his obeysance, they steal, rob, and extort his subjects there, against right and conscience; wherefore, the said Doggers finding sufficient surety before you, such as ye will answer unto us, that they shall not have with them no grains more than shall only suffice for their victualling, nor other thing with them that is forbidden; and that also they shall not, in going, coming, nor in their being at the said Iceland, take nothing but that they truly pay or agree for, and friendly entreat our said Cousin's subjects, without any robbing or extorting them in their bodies nor goods; we be content the said Doggers make their voyages thither at their liberties, every our writing or

[1] Doggers, fishing boats; they traded to Iceland for whale-oil and bone. The King of Denmark had complained of the outrageous conduct of our sailors there.

[2] In this reign the Palace of Sheen was destroyed by fire, but rebuilt, and called Richmond. (F.) The restrictions as to grain arose from the scarcity of corn this year in England, wheat selling at £1 4*s*. 2*d*. per quarter. (F.)

commandment made unto the contrary notwithstanding; and else we will that our restraint of their thither going stand still in his strength and virtue.

Given under our Signet, at our Manor of Shene the 6th day of April.

JOHN VERE, Earl of Oxynford, Great Chamberlain and Admiral of England, Viscount Bulbec, and Lord Scales, to all them that this present writing shall see or hear, greeting; and for as much as I late have received the King our Sovereign Lord's Letters, bearing date the 6th day of this month of April, according to a copy of the same signed with mine hand, which my right trusty servant John Rowe, Marshal of my Admiralty, hath for to show.

Know ye, that I, the said Earl and Admiral, have assigned and deputed my said servant to see our said Sovereign Lord's letters plainly executed, according to the tenor of the same; and by this present writing have given to him full authority and power to put under arrest all such Doggers as be disposed to make the voyage towards Iceland, to such time as they have found surety afore me, according to our said Sovereign Lord's commandment, for their demeaning in the said voyage.

Given under mine Signet and Sign Manual, the 10th day of April, the 6th year of the reign of our said Sovereign Lord King Harry the VIIth.

OXYNFORD.

285. DANISH RAIDERS CAUGHT

To the Right Worshipful, and my well-beloved Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful and right well-beloved, I commend me to you; and whereas I late received your writing, bearing date the 26th day of this present month; by the which I understand that one Richard Calle took certain men-of-war robbing upon the coast there; and

insomuch as I understand that they be under the obeissance of the King of Denmark; I will and desire you that ye deliver them unto the said Richard Calle,[1] to take his advantage of them as prisoners, seeing my duty reserved in everything, as my trust is in you. And Almighty God keep you.

Written at my Castle at Hedingham, the last day of July.

OXYNFORD.[2]

286. PIRACY ON NEUTRALS FORBIDDEN [1491?]

To the right worshipful and right entirely well beloved Counsellor, Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful and right entirely well-beloved Counsellor, I commend me to you; and whereas I understand, by your writing to me delivered by this bearer, the robbery and despoiling of certain Corvers of Holland and Zeeland, done by the ship called the Fool, whereof Robert Spenser was master, as well in herring, victual, and tackling, as ye be informed by three persons of the same ship, and of the intent and disposition of the master and fellowship of the same, which show, as ye write, that Berkeley, as well with that ship as with a prize that he hath bought, late taken of the Frenchmen, were disposed and determined to do much harm, whereupon ye have endeavoured you to break the same; howbeit that the said Berkeley hath been late with me, and found surety in a hundred pounds to answer to all such demeaning, when he shall be called; and thereupon I wrote to you to suffer him, his men, and ships, to depart at liberty; yet nevertheless, considering your large writing, I cannot be content in my mind till such time as I may hear both you and Berkeley together; willing therefore that you do keep the ships and goods in surety, and to be with

[1] R. Calle may have been a son of Margery Paston and R. Calle.

[2] Oxford was Lord Admiral of England during the whole reign of Henry VII. and Sir John Paston his Vice-Admiral during part of that time, for the Norfolk coast. The Howards had held the post earlier.

me yourself, ... bringing with you such three persons as have certainty of this matter. And so I have written to Berkeley [in any?] wise to answer to the same; and God keep you. Written this . . . . . day of October. Also if there be any of the Dutchmen . . . . . [make?] any suit for their goods, that ye then cause one of [them?] to show and claim their own.

OXYNFORD.

287. KNIGHTS OF THE BATH. STARCHAMBER (Nov., 1494)

To my right worshipful Master, Sir John Paston, Knight, in haste.

MEMORANDUM, That these be the names that were made Knights of the Bath, The Thursday before All Hallow Day.

First, My Lord Harry Duke of York (afterwards Henry VIII.).
My Lord Harington. Lord Marquis Dorset's Son.
My Lord Clifford.
My Lord Fitzwaren.
My Lord Dacre of the South [Fiennes].
My Lord Strange, Lord [Stanley's?] Son.
Sir John Arundel of the West.
Sir Walter Griffith of Lancashire.
Sir Jarvis a-Clyfton of Yorkshire.
Sir Robert Harcourt of the West.
Sir Edmund Trayford [Trafford?].
Sir Harry Marney of Essex.
Sir Roger Newborough.
Sir Ralph Rither of Yorkshire.
Sir Thomas Bawd of Hertfordshire
Sir John Speke.
Sir Humphrey Fulford.
Sir Robert Lytton.
Sir Piers Edgecombe [son of Sir Richard Edgecombe].
Sir Robert Clere.
Sir Thomas Fairfax [of Yorkshire].
Sir Richard Knightley.
Sir William Cheke.

Also Master Robert Southwell is High Sheriff of Norfolk.

Memorandum, That saffron is at xvj shillings one pound the lowest price.

Also the King and the Queen went crowned on Hallowmass day last; and my Lord of Shrewsbury bare my Lord Harry Duke of York in his arms; and ten Bishops, with mitres on their heads, going before the King that day round about Westminster Hall, with many other great estates.

Sir, there hath been so great counsel for the King's matters, that my Lord Chancellor kept not the Star Chamber this eight days, but one day at London, on Saint Leonard's Day (6 Nov.).

By your poor Priest and Servant,
SIR T. LYNG.

Sir, there hath records against me, Sir John Seyve, Vicar of Barton, John Anond, Richard Elwyn of Witton, John Bowland of Totington, Summoner, which are all forsworn on the Crucifix against me.

288. YARMOUTH AFRAID OF PERKIN WARBECK (July, 1495)

To our right honourable and especial good Master, Sir John Paston, Knight, this Letter be delivered in haste.

Some of Warbeck's Irish followers had landed in Kent, July 3rd, and been taken.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, we recommend us unto your good Mastership, certifying you that Robert Albon of Yarmouth, with many more of our neighbours, this Saturday are come home from Canterbury, and Robert Albon hath spoken with the English Captains of the King's rebels there, part of them that are taken; and Robert Albon and his company saith, that there were taken and slain to the number of sevenscore, whereof were five Captains, four of them he named over; Mountford, Whight, Belt, and Corbet; he could not tell the fifth Captain's name; and they told him that they have appointed to have a town of strength, for they would have had Sandwich, and the country had not resisted them; and so Belt said unto Robert Albon he wist well that he was but a dead man, and for as much as he wist that he was of Yarmouth, he showed him that they would have Yarmouth, or they shall die for it, as Robert saith to us. And this is a matter of truth, and therefore we desire and pray your good Mastership, that we may have your mighty help of aid and succour, and that it will please you to commune with Master Mayor of

Norwich, to move him of his succour, but in especial, that we may have your Mastership among us, with such strength of your good counsel, as your Mastership shall think most best for the King's pleasure, and for the surety of us all, for we put us in devoir to furnish the town with all that we can do, for we know none other but that they may be here, by possibility, this night or to-morrow at night at the farthest.

No more to you, but Jesu preserve you. Written at Yarmouth, in haste, this Saturday the 11th day of July.

By your own the Bailiffs of Yarmouth, with our Brethren the Commons of the same town.

Perkin had immediately returned to Flanders. The town of Yarmouth, therefore, had they known this, had at this time nothing to fear. Robert Albon, and his neighbours, had been at Canterbury, most probably, to be present at the Feast of the Translation of St. Thomas à Becket, annually kept on the 7th of July. He was one of the Bailiffs of Yarmouth the following year. (F.)

289. HENRY VII. WELCOMES PHILIP OF BURGUNDY, KING OF CASTILE (1506)

To the Right Worshipful Master Robert Darcy and Master Giles Alington, being at the George in Lombard Street, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT Worshipful Masters, I recommend me unto you, certifying you that the King's Grace and the King of Castile met this day, at three of the clock, upon Elworth Green, two miles out of Windsor, and there the king received him in the goodliest manner that ever I saw, and each of them embraced other in [his] arms.

To show you the King's apparel of England, thus it was, his horse of bay, trapped with needle work; a gown of purpure velvet; a chain with a George of Diamonds, and a hood of purpure velvet, which he put not off at the meeting of the said King of Castile; his hat and his bonnet he availed (*took off*), and the King of Castile in case like.

And the King of Castile rode upon a sorrelled hobby, which the king gave unto him; his apparel was

all black, a gown of black velvet, a black hood, a black hat, and his horse-harness of black velvet.

To show you of the king's company; my Lord Harry of Stafford rode in a gown of cloth of tissue, tucked, furred with sables; a hat of goldsmith's work, and full of stones, diamonds and rubies, riding upon a sorrelled courser barded with a bard of goldsmith's work, with roses and dragons red; and my Lord Marquis [of Dorset] riding upon a bald sorrelled horse, with a deep trapper full of long tassels of gold of Venice, and upon the crupper of his horse a white feather; with a coat upon his back, the body goldsmith's work, the sleeves of crimson velvet, with letters of gold.

My Lord of Kent upon a sorrelled horse, bald; the harness of Venice gold, with a deep fringe of half a yard of length. My Lord of Kent's coat was one bar of cloth of gold and another of crimson velvet, purled with a demy manche cut off by the elbow. These be the lords that bare the bruit (*were most talked of*).

Sir Hugh Vaughan upon a bay horse trapped with crimson velvet full of gilt bells, a gown of black velvet, and a chain of gold bawdrick wise (*belt-wise*) worth five hundred pounds. These be the spears: Master St. John upon a black horse, with harness of cloth of gold, with tassels of plunket (*blue*) and white; a coat of plunket and white, the body of goldsmith's work, the sleeves full of spangles.

John Carr and William Parr, coats like, the horses gray, of Parr, trapped with crimson velvet, with tassels of gold, and bells gilt. Carr's horse bay, with an Almayne harness of silver, an inch broad of beaten silver, both the coats of goldsmith's work the bodies, the sleeves one stripe of silver, the other gilt.

Edward Neville upon a gray horse trapped with black velvet full of small bells; his coat the one half of grain velvet, the other of white cloth of cold; these two the rutters (*casters or throwers*) of the spears, with other divers well appointed.

On the King of Castile's party, the Lord Chamberlain Chief, I cannot tell his name as yet, his apparel was

sad (*dark coloured*), and so was all the residue of his company, with cloaks of sad tawny and black, guarded, some with velvet and some with sarsenet, not passing a dozen in number.

It is said there are many behind, which shall come with the Queen of Castile, which shall come upon Tuesday.

When the King rode forth to Windsor Castle, the King rode ever upon the right hand of the King of Castile; however the King's Grace offered him to take him upon the right hand, the which he refused.

And at the alighting the King of Castile was off his horse a good space ere our King was alighted; and then the King's Grace offered to take him by the arm, the which he would not, but took the King by the arm, and so went to the King of Castile's chamber, which is the richestly hanged that ever I saw; seven chambers together, hanged with cloth of Arras wrought with gold as thick as could be; and as for three beds of state, no king christened can show such three.

This is as far as I can show you of this day, and when I can know more, ye shall have knowledge.

From Windsor this Saturday at five of the clock.

By Yours,

WILLIAM MAKEFYR.

[? Gunner.]

Windsor,
17th January, 1506.

Philip, Duke of Burgundy and heir of Maximilian, and his wife Juana of Castile, now King and Queen of Castile and Leon, were shipwrecked near Weymouth, on their way from Flanders to Spain. Henry VII. entertained them for three months with the greatest magnificence.

During the time that these royal personages remained here, Henry concluded several treaties with them for his own and his kingdom's advantage (called *Malus Intercursus* by the Flemings). He likewise obtained the delivery of Edmund de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, son of Elizabeth, the sister of Edward IV.

Henry, Earl of Stafford, was eldest son of the Duke of Buckingham.

Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, was son of the Marquis, Thomas, who was the son of Elizabeth, Queen of Edward IV. by her first husband, Sir John Grey of Groby. George Grey, Earl of Kent, was a true soldier to, and a favourite of, Henry VII., but survived this pageant a very short time, dying within the year.

Grain colours were red and purple colours dyed with the grain called Cochineal, now known to be an insect. (F.)

PART XVI

JOHN PASTON THE YOUNGEST, HEAD OF THE FAMILY, 1477–1503

John *the youngest* secured his family in the property and position schemed for by his father. His wife's mother was a Debenham and her father connected with the Yelvertons. The Cleres also were of kin to the latter and friendly to the Pastons. The old quarrel over the Fastolfe inheritance was settled by compromise, and Sir John married his daughter to a Heydon. The possession of Caister and other Fastolfe property was worth the surrender of Hellesdon and Drayton, and the Pastons became very considerable among the county families. A local saying, doubtless later than Sir John's time, ran that: "There never was a Paston poor, a Heydon a coward, or a Cornwallis a fool."

PART XVI

290. Tactful Reminders from Margery (Dec., 1477)

To my right reverend and worshipful Husband, John Paston.

Right reverend and worshipful Husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking you for the Token that ye sent me by Edmund Perys, praying you to weet that my Mother sent to my father to London for a Gown cloth of Muster develers to make of a Gown for me; and he told my Mother and me when he came home, that he charged you to buy it, after that he was come out of London.

I pray you, if it be not bought, that you will vouchsafe to buy it, and send it home as soon as ye may, for I have no gown to wear this winter but my black and my green-a-lyer, and that is so cumberous that I am weary to wear it.

. . . Of all other things that ye desired that I should send you word of, I have sent you word of in a letter that I did write on Our Lady's day last was (Dec. 8); the Holy Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Oxnead, in right great haste on the Thursday next before Saint Thomas's day (Dec. 21 or 29).

I pray you that ye will wear the Ring with the Image of St. Margaret that I sent you, for a Remembrance, till ye come home. . . .

Yours,

Margery Paston.

291. Careful Arrangements of John Paston (Feb., 1478)

To my Right Worshipful Mother Margaret Paston.

Right Worshipful Mother, after all duties of humble recommendation, in as humble a wise as I can, I beseech you of your daily blessing; please it you to weet that at my being now at London, like as ye gave me in commandment, I moved to Master Pykenham and to James Hobart for their being at Norwich this Lent, that ye might have their advices in such matters as ye let me have understanding of. And as for Master Pykenham he is now Judge of the Arches, and also he hath another office which is called Auditor Causarum, and his business is so great in both these offices, that he cannot tell the season when that he shall have leisure to come into Norfolk; but I left not till I had gotten James Hobart and him together, and then I told them your intent; and then Master Pykenham told James and me his intent; and he prayed James that he should in no wise fail to be with you this Lent; notwithstanding it was no great need to pray him much, for he told Doctor Pykenham that there was no gentlewoman in England, of so little acquaintance as he had with you, that he would be gladder to do service unto, and much the gladder, for he proposeth from henceforth during his life to be a Norfolk man, and to lie within two miles of Loddon, which is but eight or ten miles at the most from Maultby; and in conclusion he hath appointed to await on you at Norwich the week next after Midlent Sunday, all the whole week, if need be, all other matters laid apart.

Also I communed with my brother Sir John at London of such matters as ye would have amended in the bill that he sent unto you, and he stuck not greatly at it.

Also, Mother, I heard while I was in London, where was a goodly young woman to marry, which was daughter to one Seff, a mercer, and she shall have 200*l.*

in money to her marriage, and 20 marks by year of land after the decease of a step-mother of hers, which is upon fifty years of age; and ere I departed out of London, I spake with some of the maid's friends, and have gotten their good wills to have her married to my brother Edmund, notwithstanding, those friends of the maid's, that I communed with, advised me to get the good will of one Sturmyn, which is in Master Pykenham's danger so much that he is glad to please him; and so I moved this matter to Master Pykenham, and incontinent he sent for Sturmyn, and desired his good will for my brother Edmund, and he granted him his good will, so that he could get the good will of the remanent that were executors to Seff, as well as the said Sturmyn was; and thus far forth is the matter; wherefore Mother we must beseech you to help us forward with a letter from you to Master Pykenham to remember him for to handle well and diligently this matter now this Lent; and, for I am acquainted with your conditions of old, that ye reck not, who enditeth more letters than ye, therefore I have drawn a note to your Secretary's hand, Friar Perse, which letter we must pray you to send us, by the bearer hereof, and I trust it shall not be long from Master Pykenham.

Your daughter of Swainsthorp [his wife], and her sojournant, Edmund Paston, recommendeth them to you in their most humble wise, lowly beseeching you of your blessing; and as for my brother Edmund, Swainsthorp, for none intreat that his hostess your daughter nor I could intreat him, might not keep him, but that he would have been at home with you at Maultby on Sunday last part at night; and as he was departing from hence, had we word from French's wife, that, God yield (*thank*) you, Mother, ye had given him leave to disport him here with us for a seven or eight days; and so the drevyll (*simpleton*) lost his thank of us, and yet abode nevertheless. Your daughter sendeth you part of such poor stuff as I sent her from London, beseeching you to take it in gree (*favour*), though it be little plenty that she sendeth you; but as for Dates,

I will say truth, ye have not so many by two pounds, as were meant unto you, for she thinks at this season Dates right good meat, whatsoever it meaneth, I pray God send us good tidings, whom I beseech to preserve you and yours, and to send you your most desired joy.

At Swainsthorp on Ash Wednesday.

Your Son and humble servant,

JOHN PASTON.

Mother, please it you to remember that ye had need to be at Norwich five or six days before that James Hobart and your Counsel shall be there with you, for to look up your evidence and all other things ready; also if ye think that this bill that I send you herewith be good enough to send to Doctor Pykenham, ye may close up the same, and send it sealed to me again, and I shall convey it forth to him.

292. A SON AND HEIR. SIR JOHN TOUCHY (Aug., 1478)

To John Paston, Esquire, be this Letter delivered, or to my Mistress his Wife at Norwich, to deliver to him.

BROTHER John, I recommend me to you, and I thank God, my Sister your Wife, and you, of my fair Nephew Christopher, which I understand ye have, whereof I am right glad, and I pray God send you many, if it be his pleasure; nevertheless ye be not kind, that ye send me no weeting thereof; I had knowledge by Footmen, or ever ye could find any messenger on horseback to bring me word thereof.

Sir, it is so, that the Duke of Buckingham shall come on Pilgrimage to Walsingham, and so to Bokenham Castle to my Lady his Sister (Joan Knevet); and then it is supposed, that he shall to my Lady of Norfolk, and mine Uncle William cometh with him; and he telleth me, that there is like to be trouble in the Manor of Oxnead; wherefore I pray you take heed, lest that the Duke of Suffolk's Council play therewith now at the Vacation of the Benefice, as they did with the

Benefice of Drayton, which by the help of Master John Salett and Donne his man, there was a Quest made by the said Donne, that found that the Duke of Suffolk was very Patron, which was false, yet they did it for an evidence; but now if any such practice should be laboured, it is I hope in better case, for such a thing must needs be found before Master John Smyth, who is our old Friend; wherefore I pray you labour him, that, if need be, he may do us a friend's turn therein.

Item, both ye and I must needs take this matter as our own, and it were for none other cause, but for our good Grandam's sake; nevertheless ye wote well, that there is another Interest longing to us after her decease; if there be any such thing begun there by such a Frier or Priest, as it is said, I marvel that ye sent me no word thereof; but ye have now Wife and Child, and so much to care for, that ye forget me.

As for tidings here, I hear tell that my Cousin Sir Robert Chamberlain hath entered the Manor of Scolton upon your Bedfellow Conyers, whereof ye send me no word.

Item, as for the Pageant that men say that the Earl of Oxford hath played at Hammes, I suppose ye have heard thereof; it is so long ago, I was not in this Country when the tidings came, therefore I sent you no word thereof, but for conclusion, as I hear say, he leaped the Walls, and went to the Dyke, and into the Dyke to the chin; to what intent I cannot tell; some say, to steal away, and some think he would have drowned himself, and so it is deemed.[1]

No more, but I am not certain whether I shall come home in haste or not.

Written at London, the day next Saint Bartholomew (Aug. 24), in the 18th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, Knight.

[1] He did not succeed in escaping till 1485.

293. PROMPT ACTION ON SIR JOHN'S DEATH (on Nov. 15, 1479)

To my right worshipful Mother, Margaret Paston, at St. Peter's of Hungate.

RIGHT worshipful Mother, after all duties of humble recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your daily blessing and prayers; and Mother, John Clement, Bearer hereof, can tell you, the more pity is, if it pleased God, that my Brother is buried in the White Fryers at London, which I thought should not have been; for I supposed that he would have been buried at Bromholm, and that caused me so soon to ride to London, to have purveyed his bringing home; and if it had been his will to have lain at Bromholm, I had purposed all the way as I have ridden, to have brought home my Grandam and him together, but that purpose is void as now; but this I think to do when I come to London, to speak with by Lord Chamberlain, and to win by his means my Lord of Ely (Morton) if I can; and if I may, by any of their means, cause the King to take my service and my quarrel together, I will; and I think that Sir George Brown, Sir James Radcliff, and others of mine acquaintance, which wait most upon the King, and lie nightly in his Chamber [as Esquires of the Body], will put to their good wills: this is my way as yet.

And Mother, I beseech you, as ye may get or send any messengers, to send me your advice and my Cousin Lomenor's to John Lee's house, Taylor, within Ludgate.

I have much more to write, but my empty head will not remember it.

Also Mother I pray that my brother Edmund may ride to Marlingford, Oxnead, Paston, Cromer, and Caister, and in all these Manors to enter in my name, and to let the Tenants of Oxnead and Marlingford know, that I sent no word to him to take no money of them, but their Attornment; wherefore he will not, till he hear from me again, ask them none, but let him

command them to pay to [no] Servants of mine Uncle, nor to himself, nor to none other to his use, in pain of payment again to me; I think if there should be any money asked in my name, peradventure it would make my Lady of Norfolk against me, and cause her to think I dealt more contrary to her pleasure than did my brother, whom God pardon of his great mercy!

I have sent to enter at Stansted and at Orwellbury; and have written a bill to Anne Montgomery and Jane Rodon, to make [to] my Lady of Norfolk if it will be.

Your Son, and humble Servant,
JOHN PASTON.

294. DIFFICULTIES WITH UNCLE WILLIAM OVER THE INHERITANCE FROM DAME AGNES AND SIR JOHN (Nov., 1479)

To the Right Worshipful John Paston, Esq. in haste.

MY Master Paston, I recommend me to you, praying God to have mercy on my master your brother's soul, to whom ye are heir, and also to my mistress your grandam; wherefore by the advice of my mistress your careful mother, your brother Edmund, on Sunday next before Saint Andrew, rode to Marlingford, and before all the tenants examined one James, keeper there for William Paston, where he was the week next before Saint Andrew, and there he said, that he was not at Marlingford from the Monday unto the Thursday at even, and so there was no man there but your brother's man at the time of his decease; so by that your brother [Sir John] died seized; and your brother Edmund bad your man keep possession to your behest, and warned the tenants to pay no man, till you had spoken them; so meseemeth that is a remitter to the old tailed title: commune with your counsel. Further, at afternoon he was at Oxnead, to understand how they had done; and Piers kept your brother's possession at that time, and your uncle his man was not there, but he assigned

another poor man to be there, whether that continued the possession of W. Paston or not be remembered, &c.

And after the decease, &c. W. Paston sent the man that kept possession tofore, to enter and keep possession, which was no warrant by that appointment, for ye stand at your liberty as for any appointment or communication had before, and so men seem it were good for you to stand at large, till ye hear more; if ye might have my Lord Chamberlain's good favour and lordship, it were right expedient; as for my Lord of Ely, deal not with him by our advice, for he will move for treaty (*compromise*), and else be displeased. Your brother Edmund sent to John Wymondham, and he sent word he would be a mean of treaty, but would take no part, and as I suppose that was by Heydon's advice, for your uncle sent to me to be with him, and also the same man rode to Heydon and Wymondham, &c. the bringer of this letter can tell, for he was with your brother Edmund at these places.

Further, my mistress your mother greeteth you well, and sendeth you her blessing, requiring you to come once of that here, as soon as ye may: and your brother Edmund commended him to you, and he doth his diligence and part for you full well and sadly in many behalves; and hath brought my mistress your wife to Topcroft on Friday last, and they fare all well there; and he intendeth to see my master Fitzwalter, which lyeth at Freton, near Long Stratton, &c. and God be your guide in all matters, and bring you soon home.

By your
WILLIAM LOMNER.

If Sir John had been in possession (*seized*) after Dame Agnes' death his brother John was heir: if not, William could claim as nearer to his mother.

295. Too busy to be nervous (Dec., 1479)

To my right worshipful and most kind Mother, Margaret Paston.

RIGHT worshipful mother, after all duties of humble recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your daily blessing and prayer.

Please it you to understand that whereas ye willed me by Paines, to haste me out of the air that I am in; it is so that I must put me in God, for here must I be for a season, and in good faith I shall never, while God sendeth me life, dread more death than shame; and thanked be God, the sickness is well ceased here, and also my business putteth away my fear. I am driven to labour in letting of (*hindering*) the execution of mine unkind uncle's intent, wherein I have as yet none other discourage, but that I trust in God he shall fail of it.

I have spoken to my Lord of Ely divers times, which hath put me in certainty by his words, that he will be with me against my uncle, in each matter that I can shew that he intendeth to wrong me in; and he would fain have a reasonable end betwixt us, whereto he will help, as he saith; and it is certain, my brother, God have his soul! had promised to abide the rule of my Lord Chamberlain [Hastings] and of my Lord of Ely; but I am not yet so far forth; nor not will be, till I know my Lord Chamberlain's intent, and that I purpose to do to-morrow, for then I think to be with him, with God's leave. And since it is so that God hath purveyed me to be the solicitor of this matter, I thank him of his grace for the good lords, masters, and friends that he hath sent me, which have perfectly promised me to take my cause as their own, and these friends be not a few.

And mother, as I best can and may, I thank you and my cousin Lomnor of the good advice that ye have sent me, and I shall apply me to do thereafter; also, mother, I shall beseech you on my behalf to thank mine cousin Lomnor for the kindness that he hath

shewed unto me in giving of his answer to mine uncle's servant, which was with him.

Mother, I write not so largely to you as I would do, for I have not most leisure; and also when I have been with my Lord Chamberlain, I purpose not to tarry long after in London, but to dress me to you wards, at which time I trust I shall bring you more certainty of all the fardel (*burden*) that I have in my business than I can as yet write.

I am put in certainty by my most special good master, my Master of the Rolls, that my Lord of Ely is and shall be better lord to me than he hath shewed as yet, and yet hath he dealt with me right well and honourably.

Mother, I beseech you that Peacock may be sent to purvey me as much money as is possible for him to make against my coming home, for I have much to pay here in London, what for the funeral costs, debts, and legacies, that must be content (*paid*) in greater haste than shall be mine ease. Also I would the farm barley in Flegg, as well as at Paston, if there be any, were gathered, and if it may be reasonably sold, then to be sold, or put to the malting; but I would at Caister that it were out of the tenants' hands, for things that I hear: keep ye counsel this from Peacock and from all folks, which matter I shall appease, if God will give me leave.

JOHN PASTON.

296. A GRAVE-STONE. ROMAN INFLUENCE WEAK.

[Abridged.]

SIR, I pray you that ye will send some child to my Lord of Buckingham's place, and to the Crown, which, as I conceive, is called Gerard's Hall, in Bread-street, to inquire whether I have any answer of my letter sent to Calais, which ye know of; and that ye will remember my brother's stone, so that it might be made ere I come again, and that it be cleanly wrought; it is told me, that the man of Saint Bride's is no cleanly pour-

trayer, therefore I would fain it might be pourtrayed by some other man, and he to grave it up.

Sir, it is informed some persons in this country that ye know, that the friar will sue another delegate from Rome, directed to some bishop in England, to amend his matter, &c. and howbeit that it may not greatly hurt, yet the said persons would not he should have his intent, inasmuch as his suggestion is untrue, but rather they would spend money to let (*hinder*) it.

I suppose the Abbot of Bury should labour for him rather than another, because the said abbot is a pertainer to the lord that is the friar's maintainer, &c. wherefore both my mother and I pray you to inquire after a man called Clitheroe, which is solicitor and attorney with Master William Grey, that late was the king's proctor at Rome and the said Clitheroe sendeth matters and letters out of England to his said master every month, &c.; he is well known in London and among the Lombards, and with the Bishop of Winchester's men, but I wot not where he dwelleth in London. . . . and if ye think that Clitheroe will write effectually herein, give him one noble, and bid him let his master know that my Lord of Winchester and Daniel owe good will to the part that he shall labour for. And if there be found no such suit by the said friar, yet would I have something from Rome to annul the old Bull or to appair (*weaken*) it, if it might be done easily, &c. and tidings whether there be any such suit, &c.

Your own

JOHN PASTON.

For howbeit that it may neither avail nor hurt, yet my mother will [that] this be done. I send you the copy of the Bull, and how execution was done, and information of the matter in part, &c. and Sir, I shall content your noble, &c. I pray you read it over, and speed you homeward, and bring this letter home with you, &c.

297. Margery watching Uncle William (2nd Nov., 1482?)

To my Right Worshipful Master, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT reverend worshipful sir, in my most humble wise, I recommend me unto you as lowly as I can, &c. Please you to weet John Howes, Alexander Wharton, John Fille, with the parson and the new miller of Marlingford, have gotton Thomas at Well's cart of East Todenham, farmer; and mine uncle William Paston, Harry Hervey of Melton Magna, farmer, and bailiff to my said uncle, Richard Barker's cart of the said town of Melton, late farmer, and yet is in danger (*debt*) to my said uncle, and William Smyth's cart of Brandon juxta Barnham Broom, late farmer, and bailiff, and also in danger to my said uncle, on Monday and Tuesday last past carried away from Marlingford into the place at Saint Edmund's in Norwich, twelve of your great planks, of the which they made six loads, bearing about the said carts bows and glaives (*armed with bows and bills*) for fear of taking away. Sir, as for your tenants of Marlingford, they withhold their cattle and themselves both from the court, and come not within the lordship, nor make none attournment, except Thomas Davy and John Water, which absenting of the tenants is to them a great hurt and loss, for lack of seeding of their lands with their winter corn; beseeching you for God's sake to remember some remedy for them.

My Lady Calthorpe has been at Ipswich on pilgrimage, and came home by my Lady of Norfolk, and there was much communication of your matter betwixt you and mine uncle, saying to my Lady Calthorpe, ye need not have gone to London, ye might have had an end at home; remembering to my said Lady Calthorpe of the motion that he made touching the manor of Sporle, promising to my Lady to abide that, and to write and seal as largely as any man will desire him.

And at his departing from my Lady he was not merry, what the cause was I wot not. My Lady

Calthorpe desired me to write to you to have end, for he intends largely to have a peace with you, as he saith; but trust him not too much, for he is not good. My mother-in-law thinketh long she hear no word from you; she is in good health, blessed be God, and all your babes also. I marvel I hear no word from you, which grieveth me full evil; I sent you a letter by [the] brasier's son of Norwich, whereof I hear no word. No more to you at this time, but Almighty Jesu have you in his blessed keeping. Written at Norwich on Hallowmass day at night.

By your servant and beadswoman
MARGERY PASTON.

Sir, I pray you, if ye tarry long at London, that it will please [you] to send for me, for I think long since I lay in your arms.

298. THE OLD QUARREL WEARING OUT (Nov., 1482)

To my Right Worshipful Master, John Paston, Esq. be this letter delivered in haste.

MINE own sweet heart, in my most humble wise, I recommend me unto you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, the which I beseech Almighty God preserve and keep to His pleasure and your heart's desire.

Sir, the cause of my writing to you at this time, on Friday at night last past came Alexander Wharton, John Howse, and John Fille, with two good carts well manned and horsed with them to Marlingford, and there at the manor of Marlingford and at the mill loaded both carts with mestlyon and wheat, and betimes on Saturday in the morning they departed from Marlingford towards Bungay, as it is said; for the said carts came from Bungay, as I suppose, by the sending of Bryon, for he goeth hastily over the sea, as it is said, and as I suppose he will have the mestlyon over with him, for the most part of the cart loads was mestlyon, &c.

Sir, on Saturday last past, I spake with my cousin

Gorney, and he said if I would go to my Lady of Norfolk and beseech her good Grace to be your good and gracious lady, she would so be, for, he said, that one word of a woman should do more than the words of twenty men, if I would rule my tongue, and speak none harm of mine uncle; and if ye command me so for to do, I trust I shall say nothing to my Lady's displeasure, but to your profit; for me thinketh by the words of them, and of your good farmer of Oxnead, that they will soon draw to an end, for he curseth the time that ever he came in the farm of Oxnead, for he saith that he weeteth well that he shall have a great loss, and yet he will not be aknowyn (*let it be known*) whether he hath paid or not; but when he seeth his time, he will say truth.

I understand by my said cousin Gornay that my Lady is near weary of her part; and he saith my Lady shall come on pilgrimage into this town, but he knoweth not whether afore Christmas or after, and if I would then get my Lady Calthorpe, my mother-in-law, and my mother, and myself, and come before my Lady, beseeching her to be your good and gracious Lady, he thinketh ye shall have an end, for fain she would be rid of it with her honour saved, but yet money she would have. No more to you at this time, but I marvel sore that I have no letter from you, but I pray God preserve you and send me good tidings from you, and speed you well in your matters. And as for me, I have gotten me another lodging fellow, the first letter of her name is Mistress Bishop's; she recommendeth her to you by the same token that ye would have had a token to my Master Bryon.

At Norwich, the Sunday next after the feast of All Saints.

By your servant and beadswoman,
MARGERY PASTON.

299. Remonstrance on his Mother's Suspicions (1482?)

To my Right Worshipful Mother Margaret Paston.

Right worshipful Mother, in my most humble wise I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your daily blessing, and when I may, I will with as good will be ready to recompense you for the costs that my huswife and I have put you to, as I am now bound to thank you for it, which I do in the best wise I can. And, mother, it pleased you to have certain words to my wife at her departing, touching your remembrance of the shortness that ye think your days of, and also of the mind that ye have towards my brethren and sister your children, and also of your servants, wherein ye willed her to be a mean to me, that I would tender and favour the same. Mother, saving your pleasure, there needeth not ambassadors nor means betwixt you and me, for there is neither wife nor other friend shall make me to do that, that your commandment shall make me to do, if I may have knowledge of it; and if I have no knowledge, in good faith I am excusable both to God and you; and, well remembered, I wot well, ye ought not to have me in jealousy for one thing nor other that ye would have me to accomplish, if I overlive you; for I wot well none man alive hath called so oft upon you as I, to make your will and put each thing in certainty, that ye would have done for yourself, and to your children and servants. Also at the making of your will, and at every communication that I have been at with you touching the same, I never contraried anything that ye would have done and performed, but always offered myself to be bound to the same; but, mother, I am right glad that my wife is anything [in] your favour and trust, but I am right sorry that my wife, or any other child, or servant of yours should be in better favour or trust with you than myself, for I will and must forbear, and put from me that, that all your other children, servants, priests, workmen, and friends of yours, that ye will ought

bequeath to, shall take to them, and this have I, and ever will be ready unto, while I live, on my faith, and never thought other, so God be my help; whom I beseech to preserve you and send you so good life and long, that ye may do for yourself and me after my decease: and I beshrew their hearts that would other, or shall cause you to mistrust, or to be unkind to me or my friends.

At Norwich, this Monday, with the hand of your son and truest servant,

JOHN PASTON.

Margaret Paston's Will, here referred to, was dated on the 4th of February, 1481–2, 21 E. iv. and proved on the 18th of December, 1484, 2 Richard iii. (F.), *cf.* G. 978. She died November 4th, 1484.

300. KEEPING CHRISTMAS IN MOURNING (1484)

To my right worshipful husband John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you; Please it you to weet, that I sent your eldest Son to my Lady Morley, to have knowledge what Sports were used in her house in Christmas next following, after the decease of my Lord her husband; and she said, that that there were none Disguisings, nor Harping, nor Luting, nor Singing, nor none loud Disports; but playing at the Tables (*Back gammon*), and Chess, and Cards; such disports she gave her Folks leave to play and none other.

Your Son did his errand right well as ye shall hear after this. I sent your youngor Son to the Lady Stapleton, and she said according to my Lady Morley's saying in that; and as she had seen used in places of worship thereas she hath been.

I pray you that ye will assure to you some man at Caister, to keep your Buttery, for the man that ye left with me, will not take upon him to breve (*keep accounts*) daily as ye commanded; he saith, he hath not used to give a reckoning neither of Bread nor Ale, till at the week's end, and he saith, he wot well that he should not content it and therefore I suppose he shall not abide,

and I trow ye shall be fain to purvey another man for Symond, for ye are never the nearer a wise man for him.

I am sorry that ye shall not at home be for Christmas.

I pray you that ye will come as soon as ye may; I shall think myself half a Widow, because ye shall not be at home, &c. God have you in his keeping. Written on Christmas Even.

By your MARGERY PASTON.

301. LIFE AT CAISTER

To my Master John Paston be this delivered.

[John Paston was Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, 1485–6.]

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, in my most humble wise I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare, the which I beseech God to preserve to his pleasure, and to your heart's desire.

Sir, I thank you for the venison that ye sent me; and your ship is sailed out of the haven as this day.

Sir, I send you by my brother William your stomacher of damask. As for your tippet of velvet it is not here; Ann saith that ye put in your casket at London.

Sir, your children be in good health, blessed be God.

Sir, I pray you send me the gold, that I spake to you of, by the next man that cometh to Norwich.

Sir, your mast that lay at Yarmouth is let to a ship of Hull for 13*s.* 4*d.* and if there fall any hurt thereto, ye shall have a new mast therefore.

No more to you at this time, but Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Caister Hall the 21st day of January, in the first year of King Harry the VIIth (1486).

I pray God no ladies no more overcome you, that ye give no longer respite in your matters.

By your Servant,
MARGERY PASTON.

302. Flower of Ointments

To Dame Margaret Paston, at Oxnead.

[John Paston had been Knighted, 1487.]

Mistress Margery, I recommend me to you, and I pray you in all haste possible to send me, by the next sure messenger that ye can get, a large plaster of your Flos Unguentorum for the King's Attorney James Hobart; for all his disease is but an ache in his knee; he is the man that brought you and me together, and I had lever than 40*l.* ye could with your plaster depart him and his pain. But when ye send me the plaster, ye must send me writing, how it should be laid to and taken from his knee; and how long it should abide on his knee unremoved; and how long the plaster will last good; and whether he must lap any more cloths about the plaster to keep it warm or not; and God be with you.

Your John Paston.

James Hobart was appointed Attorney General in 1486, and so continued during his life; he was a man of great learning and wisdom, and died full of riches and honour in 1509–10. (F.)

303. A Whale for the King and the Admiral

To the Right Honourable Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered.

[John Paston was Vice-Admiral for the East Anglian coast under the Earl of Oxford, Admiral of England, 1489.]

Right reverend and honourable, after the order of all due recommendation had, I recommend me unto your mastership. Sir, it is so that John Taylor of Bridgeham, Deputy in your office of the Admiralty, was with me this morning to have mine advice in this matter following, and the which is this.

There was taken against Thornham, in the King's stream, being two fathoms and a half deep upon the sea, a Whale Fish by Thornham-men labouring all night on Sunday night last was, and so have slain it, and brought to land; upon the which your said Deputy hath been

there as yesterday and seized my Lord's [Oxford's] part thereof, whereof the people was glad it should so be; then John a'Lowe was there, and he said to your Deputy that he would have the King's part in this wise, that the King and my Lord should part the half; Sir, the law civil saith thus, "If any fish royal be found on the sea, that is to say, Whale, Bales, Sturgeon, Porpus, or Grampus, that my Lord Admiral shall have the halverdele (*half-part*), &c.

I think my Lord hath the King's prerogative upon the sea, the which I remit to your discretion, &c.

Sir, by likelihood, without ye take heed and send thither some of yours, my Lord's part shall be little; it is a great fish and a royal; your Deputy showeth me it is eleven fathom (66 *feet*) and more of length, and two fathom (12 *feet*) of bigness and deepness in the mid fish.

Sir, remember what ye have to do, there come not such a casualty in your time of your office, &c.

Wherefore this, by the information of your said Deputy, cause me to write unto you this simple bill, praying you to pardon me of the writing, for it was done in haste, and this bill I sent to William Brykks (*Briggs?*) your servant, to Matlaske, by mass time, to bring it to you; and this day they purpose to break it. Do herein now as it please you, and Almighty God have you and all yours in his keeping; beseeching you that this simple bill may recommend my poor wife unto your mastership.

Written on Candlemas day, in haste, at Wells.

Your

T. GRIGGS.

304. THE KING AND THE ADMIRAL RELINQUISH THEIR WHALE. THE WAR OF BRITTANY (1489)

To my Right Worshipful Master, Sir John Paston, Knight, this letter be delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, in the most humble wise I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare, the which God long continue.

Sir, mine brother William recommends him unto you; and as for the letter that ye sent unto him, he hath showed mine Lord [Oxford] the intent thereof, and he thinketh himself, that it is no part of his duty to have any part of the fish, or any money that should grow thereof; nevertheless, my Lord, according as your desire was in the letter, had questioned John a'Lowe of this fish, afore the coming of John Daniel, what he had done withall; and he answered, as for the nether chavil (*jaw*) thereof he had put it in surety, and laid it in a house, because your deputy seized it to mine Lord's use, till it might be understood whether the property were in the King, or in my Lord; and so my Lord held him well content it should be so, inasmuch as the King and my Lord have commanded John a'Lowe that this foresaid chavil should be brought up to the King in all goodly haste.

Furthermore, my brother William perceived by your writing, that ye could make the remanent of the fish worth a four pound to my Lord; my Lord would ye should not trouble yourself no more withall, because he thinketh that the property is not in him. And also another, my brother William heareth say in the court, that the King and my Lord be content that the remanent of the fish be to the use of them of the country, the which ye shall hear the more certain thereof hereafter.

Also my brother William saith, that my Lord willed you that ye should send the return of the commission, as hastily as ye can, and marvels that ye have not sent it up ere this.

As towards the breaking up of the Parliament, many likelihoods there be, that it should continue no while, and these be they: my Lord the Archbishop of York, as yesterday, and mine Lord of Northumberland shall go, as on Friday, and also all such folks, as shall go into Bretaigne, shall be at Portsmouth on Saturday come fortnight, and the Monday after on sea board, at which season the King intended to be there to take the musters; and as for those gentlemen that took shipping

to have gone over into Bretaigne upon a fortnight ago, that is to say, Sir Richard Edgecumbe, the Comptroller, Sir Robert Clifford, Sir John Turberville, and John Motton, serjeant porter, be arrived again upon the coast of England, save only Sir Richard Edgecumbe, who landed in Bretaigne, and there was in a town called Morlaix, which anon upon his coming was besieged with the Frenchmen, and so [he] escaped hardly with his life; the which town the Frenchmen have gotten, and also the town called Brest; howbeit the castle holdeth, as we hear say.

And there be appointed certain captains at this season, which be Lord Brooke, Sir John Cheney, Sir John of Arundel, Sir John Beauchamp, Sir John Gray, mine brother Audley, mine uncle Sir Gilbert Debenham, and Thomas Stafford, and many other knights and esquires.

And, Sir, I thank you for the letter that ye sent me; also Sir, I have fulfilled my pilgrimage, thanks be to God.

Also, Sir, we understand that it is enacted of every ten marks (*6l. 13s. 4d.*) of movable goods 20*d.* to the King, beside the tenth of every man's lands.

And, Sir, my brother Heydon shall send you the certain of all other things granted at this parliament, for he hath caused John Daniel to tarry all this day for his letter, because he was with the King at Westminster, so that he might not intend to write it till night.

Also, Sir, Master Calthorpe hath payed one hundred marks to the King. Also, Sir, I have delivered the ten pounds to Master Hawes, and received of him the obligation. Also, I have delivered the twenty marks to Edmund Dorman, by my brother Heydon's commandment.

No more to you at this time, but God and the Holy Trinity have you in their keeping; and my sister Ann, with all the company, recommend them unto you.

Written at London, the 10th day of February.

By your servant,
MARGERY PASTON.

305. Grateful Gift of a Porpoise (1489)

To our right reverend and worshipful and special good Master, Master Paston.

Right reverend and worshipful Sir, and our very loving and courteous good Master, we recommend us unto you in as faithful wise as on our part appertaineth; and heartily we thank you for your labour, and letter which ye sent to us by your servant; by the which we were ascertained of the King's pleasure; and to accomplish the same, we with the assistance of your Mastership will put us in our devoir.

We were at your Manor of Caister, to have seen your Mastership, but ye were departed as well from Yarmouth yesterday, as this day from Caister.

We would have been joyous to have seen your mastership, if our fortune so had been.

Sir, we be informed that our old special good Lord of Oxford, in whom we found as great favour by the mediation of your mastership as ever we had of any creature, as we have writing to show; in recompense of which at all times since, his Lordship hath had our prayers; and now we would have waited upon his Lordship, but your Mastership knoweth well we may not be absent on Michaelmas day for divers considerations. Wherefore we beseech your good Mastership, ye like of your gentleness to recommend us unto our said good Lord, and to make our excuse to him, and to do his Lordship be presented with a Porpoise, which we send you by the bringer of this; and if we had any other dainties to do him a pleasure, we would, that knoweth God, whom we beseech of his infinite mercy to preserve the King, our Sovereign Lord, and our said good Lord, and you, and all the fruits (*descendants*) of you from all adversity.

Your Lovers and Beadsmen, the old Bailiffs of Yarmouth, and the new Bailiffs that now shall be.

In our ancient feasts the Porpoise often makes his appearance as a fish in estimation; when George Neville gave his grand Installation feast, as Archbishop of York, in 1466, four Porpoises were placed on the tables. (F.)

306. Dame Brews' Thanks [1488–9?]

To my Right Worshipful Son, Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful Son, I recommend me unto you and to my Lady your wife, and thanking you heartily for the great labour that ye had on Thursday for me, and for your kindness, for and other had done as ye did, I had had my purpose, wherefore I pray God do by them as they do by me.

Son, I must pray you to have a dozen men in harness, with bows and weapon convenient for them, that I may fetch my stres (*distress*) again; the Sheriff's man was here with me, and one of yours, he saith he is, and he hath made me faithful promise that he will be with me again on Monday, wherefore I pray you heartily, Son, and require you that your men may be with me on Monday, as my very trust is in you, which knoweth blessed Jesu, whom have you and your in his keeping.

By your true Mother,
Dame Elizabeth Brewse.

307. A Humorous Request to Lord FitzWalter for Rabbits

Humbly beseecheth your good Lordship, your daily servant and beadsman, John Paston, more caitiff than knight, that it may please you of your special grace to direct out your letters, signed with your hand and sealed with your seal, to the dreadful man James Radcliff, of Billingford, Squire, farmer of your warren there; out of whose warren, no manner of man nor vermin dare take on him, for doubts of your said dreadfull [man], to take or carry away any of your game there, for fear of being hanged up among other misdoers and forfeitors, as weasels, lobsters (*stoats*), polecats, basarts (*hawks*), and main curs; that the said James shall, upon the

sight of your said writing, deliver, or cause to be delivered, to your said beseecher, or to his deputy, deliverer of your said letters, at his first sight of the same, six couple of black conies or running rabbits, or some black and some white, to the said number, to store with a new ground of your said beseecher at Oxnead, more like a pinfold than a park; and your said beseecher shall daily pray to God for the preservation of your noble estate long to endure.

The qualification by estate to kill game in Henry the Seventh's time was forty shillings a year. A warren is, properly, a place privileged by prescription, or grant of the king, for the preservation of the beasts and fowls of warren, namely, hares, conies, partridges and pheasants.

Sir John Radcliff, Lord Fitzwalter, in right of his mother Elizabeth, heir of Walter Lord Fitzwalter, was attainted and beheaded for being concerned in the plot of Perkin Warbeck in 1495. (F. and G.)

308. Barter with the Bishop of Durham

To the Right Worshipful Sir, my right trusty and right entirely well-beloved Friend, Sir John Paston, Knight.

IHS XTUS.

Right worshipful Sir, and mine especial, and of long time, approved, trusty, and faithful friend, I, in mine heartiest wise, recommend me unto you; and forasmuch as I have coals and other things in these parts, and also ye have in those parts corns, wine, and wax; and as I am informed ye be not evil-willed to deal with me, no more than I am to deal with you, in uttering (*selling*), and also in receiving of such things, the which might be to the profit of us both; I therefore send unto you at this time William Walter, Gentleman Usher of my Chamber, to commune with you herein; so that by deliberation such a way may be taken in this behalf, as may be to the profit of either of us, and whereby our familiarity and friendship may be increased in time to come. Whereunto, for our old acquaintance together, ye shall find me full ready, after my power, by the grace of our Lord, who ever keep you, and send you much worship and long prosperity.

Scribbled in the most haste, at my Castle or Manor of Auckland, the 27th day of January, 1489.

Your own true Lover and Friend,
JOHN DURESME.

309. A GRATEFUL HANSE MERCHANT

HONOURABLE and well-beloved Knight, I commend me unto your Mastership, and to my Lady your wife; I thank your Mastership [for] that ye have done for me; I send my Lady a little piece of Rhenish wine of the best, of ten gallons, and half an hundred oranges; I shall send her more against Pentecost, that she may have fresh; and Renold has not given me the two nobles and forty-one pence, that ye told me of, for the wine; and my service by night and by day to your commandment, if your Mastership will any thing with me, I shall be at Cley.

No more than God be with you. Written upon the Tuesday after Palm Sunday.

LUMEN HARYSON [Henrikson],
at your commandment.

310. ACCUSATION OF BEING A SCOT

To our Right Worshipful Cousin, Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT Worshipful Cousin, in right hearty wise I commend me unto you, and where[as] I understand by Thomas Hartford, a bowyer of Norwich, bearer hereof, [that he] hath been put to great vexation and trouble by one Thomas Hogan, shoemaker, of Norwich, and that I perceive ye have heard the matter depending in traverse betwixt the said parties; I therefore desire you that, in the right of the foresaid Thomas Hartford, ye will be unto him good master, and the better for this mine instance, as my singular trust is in you. And where[as] I conceive also that the same Thomas is

noised in Norfolk for a Scotsman born; ye shall understand that I perceive well, by such honest folks as I have heard speak within the city of York, that the said Thomas was born there, and his father there inhabiting, and his godfathers and mothers, the which be right honest persons; and for that this is true, and not feigned, ye shall understand the mayor of the city of York and his brethren have made great instance unto me to write for the said Thomas; for whom I must needs do, because they are my nigh neighbours, as our Lord knoweth, who have you in his blessed safeguard.

Written in the castle of Sheriff Hutton, the 24th day of April.

Your loving Cousin,
THOMAS SURREY.[1]

The castle of Sheriff-Hutton is situated about ten miles north of the city of York.

311. PESTILENCE. ENCLOSING A COMMON [1495?]

To my most special Good Father, Sir John Paston, Kt.

AFTER most humble wise of recommendation, in my most loving wise, I beseech you of your daily blessing, showing you that I am at Sir John Fortescue's Place, because they sweat so sore at Cambridge.

Also, I show you that Master Thomas Clark is deceased, [on] whose soul God have mercy.

Also, I beseech you that ye will see a remedy for the Common of Snailwell, for the bailiff of Snailwell and one of the farmers, was with my tutor and me, and showed me that all the common should be taken away, but for Master Cotton and the Vicar of Fordham, whom I beseech you to thank. From Pamsborough,[2] by your most humble servant,

WILLIAM PASTON.

[1] See App. I.
[2] Punsborne, near Hatfield, in Hertfordshire. (G.)

William Paston, son of Sir John and Dame Margery Paston, was

born in 1479 or 1480. He married Bridget, the daughter of Sir Henry Heydon, about 1505. He was twice high Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, the first time in 1518, when he was knighted, and again in 1529. He . . . attended Henry VIII. to France, died at Paston, where he was buried, Sept., 1554. (F.) Christopher, the eldest son, died early.

The device on his seal is a lamb, surmounted by a W., perhaps a rebus for William, that is Willamb. (F.)

312. A Love-match permitted (1495–1503)

To the right worshipful and my right entirely well-beloved Cousin and Friend, Sir John Paston, Knight.

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you. I write this only unto you, to advise you that I was minded that my Cousin Clippesby, bearer hereof, should well have married here in these parts, wherein your niece [1] took heavy conceit, thinking in her mind, that I was not willing that my said Cousin should marry with her.

At that time I knew not what love was betwixt them; but now I understand that both their minds are to marry together; whereunto, on my part, I am agreeable and well content, desiring and praying you to be the same; and to be the better friend unto them at this my prayer and instance. And what pleasure, as I may do unto you in these parts, shall be ready, in that I may, at your desires.

And I pray you to recommend me to my Cousin your niece; and Jesu preserve you.

Written at London, the first day of June.

Your own, the Prior of St. John's,
Sir John Kendal.

[1] John Clippesby, of Oby, ward and step-son of Edmund Paston, married Constance, natural daughter of Sir John Paston, who died 1479. (*So* F.) She was brought up by Margaret Paston, then by John and Margery. G. thinks the niece is Constance, daughter of William Paston, Sir John's younger brother.

313. Arbitration in a Complicated Case (1503)

East Beckham.

The Award.

Where[as] Sir John Paston and Roger Townshend have agreed and promised to obey as we James Hobart and John Yaxley will devise for the variance of (*concerning*) the Manor of East Beckham.

We devise and award that Sir John Paston shall have the said Manor to him, and to his heirs; and he therefore shall pay to the said Roger 40*l.* at Pentecost next; and at Halowmas next after that, 40*l.*; and at Pentecost next after that, 20*l.*; and the same Sir John shall have the arrearages of the said Manor. And if the said Sir John refuse to have the Manor, then the said Roger to have the same Manor, with the arrearages as is aforesaid, paying to the said Sir John the said 100*l.* at the days aforesaid; and the said Sir John to give answer which he will choose the 8th day of this month.

Given the 6th day of February, the 18th year of the reign of Henry VII.; and all this to be performed and put in surety after our advice.

And we devise that he that shall have the land shall pay to the other, at Halowmas come twelvemonth, ten marks, besides the said 100*l.*, because the arrearages have been long in the tenant's hands.

John Yaxley.
James Hobart.

The manor of [East] Beckham had been purchased by Judge Paston. His son and grandson had raised money on it, pledging it to the Townshends in such a way that the ownership had become doubtful. (*From* F.)

314. Archbishop Warham on the Death of Sir John Paston (Sept., 1503)

[He was then bishop of London and elect of Canterbury. (G.)]

To my Cousin Master William Paston.

Cousin Paston, I recommend me unto you, and have received your letter, by the which I have understanding of the death of my cousin, your father, whose soul Jesu assoil. I will counsel and exhort you to take it as well and as patiently as ye can, seeing that we all be mortal and born to die. And whereas ye desire to have a letter *ad colligendum*, after mine advice ye shall do well to be here with me at Michaelmas next coming; and at your then coming I shall be glad to do you the best comfort and help that I can, counselling that ye in the mean time do not intermeddle in any wise with the administering of any part of your father's goods, nor with the receiving of his debts, for divers causes.

[In] the mean season look that ye be of as comfortable cheer as ye can, exhorting my lady, your mother-in-law,[1] to be in like wise; to whom I pray you to have me recommended.

Thus fare ye heartily well. From London this 6th day of September.

Yours,

William Elect of [London].

(*Slip for* Canterbury.)

[1] After the death of his wife Margery, in 1495, Sir John Paston married Agnes, daughter of N. Morley of Glynde, widow of J. Hervey and of J. Isley. (F.)

APPENDIX I

Explanatory Index of Persons mentioned in the Letters

(L., Lancastrian; Y., Yorkist)

Beaumont, (i) Viscount John B., (L.), *killed* at Northampton, 1460.
,, (ii) William, son of above, helped Oxford to hold St. Michael's Mount, *d.* 1507, in Oxford's care.

Bedford, John, Duke of, brother of Henry V. Regent of France, *died* 1435. Several of his Captains played considerable parts in France and in the Wars of the Roses, *e.g.* John Fastolfe, Wm. Oldhall, John Bourchier (Lord Berners), James Butler (Earl of Ormond), Richard Woodville, Andrew Ogarde.

Bedford, Duchess of, Jacquetta de Luxembourg (*or* de St Pol), widow of above, *married* 2ndly, Sir R. Woodville (*see* Rivers), mother of Elizabeth, Queen of Edward IV.

Bolevn, Sir Geoffrey of Salle, Lord Mayor, great-grandfather of Q. Elizabeth. Bought Blickling. The house was rebuilt in 1628.

Bonville, William, Lord (Y. after 1454), rival of the Courtenays in Devon, *executed* after 2nd Battle of St. Albans, 1461.

Bourchier (Bourgchier, Bowcher), Thomas B. (Y.), Bishop of Ely, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1454; Cardinal, 1471; Chancellor, 1455.

Bourchier, Henry B., Viscount (Y.), brother of above. Treasurer, 1456, 1460–70, and 1471–83; *cr.* Earl of Essex, 1461; *d.* 1483. His son is called Lord Bourchier sometimes.

Brackley, Friar John, D.D., Brother of the Grey Friars of Norwich. A famous preacher.

Brandon, *see* p. 304.

Buckingham, Humphrey Stafford, Duke of (L.), *k.* at Northampton, 1460. Half-brother of the Bourchiers. Succeeded by a grandson.

Burgundy, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, was sovereign of the *Franche Comté* of Burgundy, nominally a part of the Empire, and also of Flanders and some adjacent provinces. He *m.* Margaret of York, was a persistent foe of Louis XI, *d.* 1477, worsted by the Swiss, whom he claimed as subjects. His daughter Mary carried Flanders to the Hapsburgs by marrying the Emperor Maximilian. Philip, the Archduke, was her son, Charles V. her grandson.

Burgundy, Antony, called the Bastard of B., Count de la Roche, half-brother to Charles the Bold, famous for his chivalrous accomplishments, useful as an ambassador, *d.* 1504.

Canterbury, Archbps. of—
1414–43, Henry Chichele (formerly of St. Davids).
1443–52, John Stafford (of Wells).
1452–54, John Kemp, Cardinal (of York).
1454–86, Thomas Bourchier (of Ely).
1486–1500, John Morton (of Ely).
1501–03, Henry Dean (of Salisbury).
1503–32, William Wareham (of London).

CLIFFORD, Thomas, Lord (L.), *k.* at St. Albans, 1455.
CONYERS of Marske (?), The "Robin of Redesdale" who rebelled.
CROMWELL, Lord (i) Ralph de C. (L.), of Tattershall. Personal foe of Suffolk, terrorised Lincolnshire together with Lords Welles and Willoughby d'Eresby. Treasurer, 1434–43; *d.* 1456, *see* p. 50.
,, ,, (ii), Humphrey Bourchier (Y.), who *m.* R. de Cromwell's niece, Joan Stanhope; *k.* at Barnet, 1471.

DANIEL, Sir Thomas (called My Lord in Paston L. sometimes), Esquire of the Body to Henry VI (L.), but no friend to Suffolk. Attainted 1461, restored 1474; brother-in-law to Sir J. Howard (D. Norfolk). John Paston supported him at first.
DEVON, Earl of (i), Thomas Courtenay (L. after 1454), rival of the Bonviles.
,, ,, (ii), Thomas, son of above (L.), *ex.* after Towton, 1461.
,, ,, (iii), John, brother of above (L.), *k.* at Tewkesbury, 1471.
,, ,, (iv), Sir Humphrey Stafford of Southwick (Y.), *created* Earl, 1469, after procuring execution of the heir of Courteney; *ex.* by Warwick, 1469.

EDGECUMBE, Sir Richard, an officer of Edward IV. Rose with Buckingham against Richard III; faithful supporter of Henry VII.
ELY, Bishops of, Thos. Bourchier, 1443–54; W. Gray, 1454–78; John Morton, 1479–86; F. Alcock, 1486–1500.
ESSEX. *See* BOURCHIER, HENRY.
EXETER, Duke of (i), John Holland (L.), *d.* 1446.
,, ,, (ii), Henry Holland (L.), son of above, *murdered* 1475.
,, Duchess of (i), Anne Montacute, dau. of Earl of Salisbury, widow of Duke John.
,, ,, (ii), Anne, sister of Edward IV, wife of Duke Henry. She obtained a political divorce and *m.* Sir Thos. St. Leger; *d.* 1476.

FALCONBRIDGE (L.), Thomas Neville, a natural son of William Neville, Lord Falconbridge, made Vice-Admiral by Warwick (1470). On Edward's return he tried to raid London, surrendered, was pardoned, and re-appointed till Edward felt secure, then beheaded, Sept., 1471.
FASTOLFE, Sir John, one of the captains of John D. of Bedford, executor of his will; a miser and profiteer. Bequeathed his lands to John Paston on condition of his founding a College of Priests at Caister. His courage, at the Battle of Herrings, was doubted, and Bedford is said to have deprived him of his K.G. He evaded his plain duty in Cade's rising, and was unpopular.

GREY OF RUTHYN, Edmund, Lord, one of the most violent of the nobility; murdered Speaker Tresham; betrayed Henry VI and his army at Northampton; *cr.* earl of Kent by Edward IV, succeeded by his son George.
GREY, Marquis of Dorset, etc. (Grey of Groby), the family of Eliz. Woodville and her first husband. *See* Table, p. 204.

HASTINGS, Wm. Lord, *cr.* 1461 (Y.) Staunch supporter of Edward IV. Lord Chamberlain, Lieutenant of Calais. Patron of Sir John Paston.

HERBERT, a powerful family on the Welsh March (Y.) Sir Wm. Herbert obtained great rewards from Edward IV, and was created Earl of Pembroke to rival Jasper Tudor. Executed, with his brother, by Warwick after Edgecote, 1469.

HEYDON, John, of Baconsthorpe, Norf., a lawyer, fomenter of quarrels and false judgments; enemy of the Pastons; Recorder of Norwich. He was "maintained" by Tuddenham and by Scales (i) and Suffolk (i).

HOWARD, *see* Table, p. 230, and p. 84, *note*.

MORLEY, The Lady (i), widow of Thomas, Lord Morley (he *d.* 1435).
,, ,, (ii), ,, William Lovel, Lord Morley (he *d.* 1476).

MOLEYNS, Robert Hungerford (L.), Lord, afterwards Lord Hungerford; *ex.* after Hexham, 1464. He *m.* the heiress of Moleyns; seized Paston's manor of Gresham, 1448.

NORFOLK, Duke of (i), John Mowbray (Y.), 3rd D., *d.* 1461.
,, ,, (ii), ,, ,, (Y.), 4th D., son of above, seized Caister; *d.* suddenly 1476.
,, ,, (iii), Sir John Howard (Y.), *cr.* D. by Richard III, 1483; *k.* at Bosworth, 1485.

NORFOLK, Duchess of, (i), the Old Duchess, Catherine (Neville), widow of 2nd D. (previously widow of Sir T. Strangways and Visct. Beaumont). She *m.* 4thly Sir John Woodville, 1464.
,, ,, (ii), Eleanor (Bourchier), wife of 3rd D.
,, ,, (iii), Elizabeth (Talbot), wife of 4th D.

NORTHUMBERLAND, Earl of (i), Henry Percy, a favourite with Henry V (L.), 2nd Earl, *k.* at St. Albans, 1455, aet. c. 60.
,, ,, (ii), Henry Percy, 3rd Earl (L.), *k.* at Towton, 1461, son of above.
,, ,, (iii), (Y.), John Neville, Lord Montagu, 1464–70, deprived of it on restoration of
,, ,, (iv), (1470), Henry Percy (Y.), son of the 3rd Earl.

NORWICH, Bishops of, Thomas Brown, 1436–46; Walter Lyhart, 1446–72; J. Goldwell, 1472–99.

OXFORD, Earl of (i), John de Vere (L.), 12th Earl, *ex.*, with his eldest son, 1462. By his marriage with a Howard he inherited property in Norfolk and Essex, and was a rival to the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk. *See* Table, App. II. (4).
,, ,, (ii), John de Vere (13th Earl), 2nd son of above, restored 1465; joined Warwick (1470), escaped from Barnet, seized St. Michael's Mount (1473), surrendered, imprisoned at Hammes, attainted, tried vainly to escape, succeeded in 1484, joined Henry VII. Powerful, especially in the Eastern counties, till his death, 1513. Patron of John Paston (iii).
,, Countess of (i), Elizabeth (Howard), wife of 12th Earl.
,, ,, (ii), Margaret (Neville), 1st wife of 13th Earl.

RIVERS, Richard Woodville (*first* L. *then* Y.), *m.* Duchess dowager of Bedford, created Lord R. 1448; supported Edward IV; captured, 1460, by Warwick, at Sandwich; *ex.* by Warwick, with his son, 1469, after Edgecote.

SALISBURY, Richard Neville (Y.), Earl of, *m.* heiress of Montacute, Earl of S., brother-in-law of Richard D. York, *ex.* after Wakefield, 1460.

SCALES, Lord (i), Thomas de Scales, 7th Lord (L.), *k.* 1460 in a scuffle at the Tower. He abandoned Lord Say to Cade, 1450.

,, ,, (ii), Anthony Woodville (Y.), *m.* heiress of above, famous for fashionable chivalry, succeeded as Earl Rivers; *ex.* 1483 by Richard III.

SHREWSBURY, John Talbot, Earl of (L.), *k.* at Northampton, 1460.

SOMERSET, Duke of (L.) (i), Edmund Beaufort, *cr.* 1448, head of L. Party after Suffolk's death. William Paston, senior, *m.* one of his daughters; *k.* at St. Albans, 1455; blamed for the loss of Normandy.

,, ,, (ii), Henry Beaufort, son of above, previously Earl of Dorset.

STAFFORD, Sir Humphrey of Grafton (L.), *k.* in Cade's rising, 1450.

STAFFORD, Humphrey, Lord S. (L.), son of Duke of Buckingham, *k.* at St. Albans, 1455.

STAFFORD, Henry, Lord S. (L.), brother of above, 2nd husband of the Lady Margaret, *d.* 1475 (1481?).

STAFFORD, John, Archbp. of Canterbury. *See* CANTERBURY.

STAFFORD, Humphrey, of Southwick, brother of the Archbp. *See* DEVON.

SUFFOLK, Duke of (i), William de la Pole, Earl and then Duke (L.). Principal Minister of Henry VI, exiled and *murdered* 1450.

,, ,, (ii), John De la Pole, 2nd Duke, son of above; turned Y.; *m.* Elizabeth, sister of Edward IV; drove the Pastons from Hellesdon and Drayton; *d.* 1491. Unimportant in war and politics.

,, Duchess (i), Alice (Chaucer), widow of Duke (i). Had great influence at Court of Henry VI.

,, ,, (ii), Elizabeth of York, wife of Duke (ii).

SURREY, Earl of, Thomas Howard. *See* Table, p. 230.

TAILBOYS [Taillebois, Tallboys], William, Lord T. (L.), a turbulent lord in S. Lincs.; created Earl of Kyme, his seat near Sleaford. His feud with Lord Cromwell (he being supported by Suffolk) helped to begin the troubles of 1450; *ex.* after Hexham, 1464.

TUDDENHAM, Sir Thomas, retainer of Lord Scales (i); of Suffolk's party; enemy of the Pastons. Did not join Warwick; beheaded, 1462.

WARWICK, Richard Neville, Earl of (Y.), *m.* heiress of the Beauchamp Earls of W., son of Salisbury and nephew of the Duchess of York; the true leader of the Yorkist party, *k.* at Barnet, 1471.

WELLES (i), Leo, Lord, close friend of Lords Cromwell and Willoughby.

,, (ii), Richard, eldest son of above, married Willoughby's heiress, executed as Lord Willoughby and Welles, 1470, with his son, Sir Robert Welles.

WILTSHIRE, James Butler, Earl of Ormond and W. (L.).

WINCHESTER, Bps. of, William Waynflete, 1447–86. P. Courteney, 1487–92; T. Langton, 1493–1500; Richard Fox, 1500–28.

WOODVILLE. *See* RIVERS, SCALES.

WORCESTER, John Tiptoft, Earl of (Y.), a patron of learning; *ex.* 1470 by Warwick. His sister and heiress had *m.* W.'s brother Montagu. As constable of England he used martial law and torture.

YORK, Archbps. of—
1426–52, John Kemp, Cardinal, previously of London.
1452–64, Wm. Booth (Coventry and Lichfield).
1465–76, George Neville (Exeter), brother of Warwick.
1476–80, Lawrence Booth (Durham).
1480–1500, Thos. Rotherham (Lincoln).

YORK, Duke of (i), Richard Plantagenet, Protector, March, 1454, to March, 1455; Governor of Normandy, Lieut.-Governor of Ireland, heir of York and Cambridge and of Mortimer. Enormously wealthy; claimed the Crown, *k.* at Wakefield, 1460.

,, ,, (ii), Richard, younger son of Edward IV, *m.* to child heiress of Mowbray of Norfolk, and nominal D. of Norfolk, *murdered* 1483.

TREASURERS.

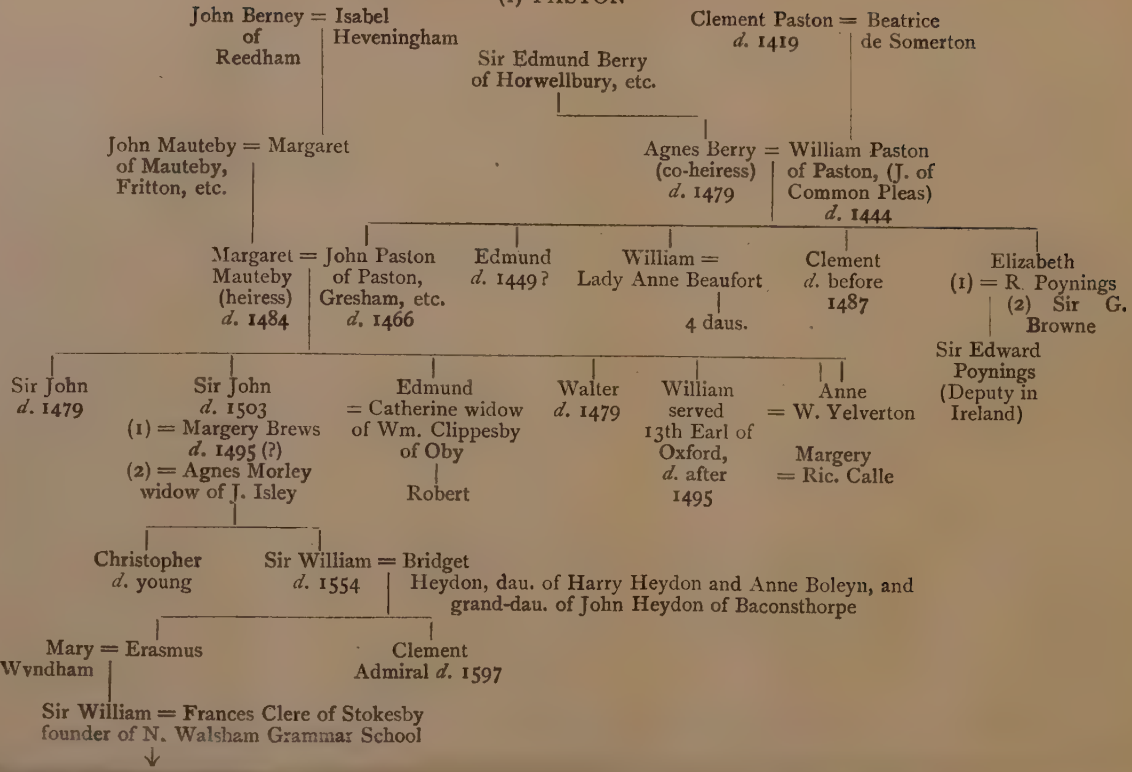
1455, March. Earl of Ormond and Wiltshire (L.).
1455, May (after St. Albans). Visct. Bourchier (Y.).
1456, Oct. E. of Shrewsbury (L.).
1458. E. of Wiltshire (L.).
1460, July (after Northampton). Bourchier (Y.).
1464–66. Wm. Blount, Lord Mountjoy (Y.).
1466, March. Lord Rivers (for Edward IV), *ex.* 1469.
1469, Aug. Sir J. Langstrother, Prior of St. John (L. for Warwick).
1469, Oct. W. Gray, Bp. Ely (for Edward IV).
1470, Oct. Langstrother, *ex.* after Tewkesbury.
1471, May. Bourchier, *d.* 1483.
1483. Sir John Wode.

CHANCELLORS.

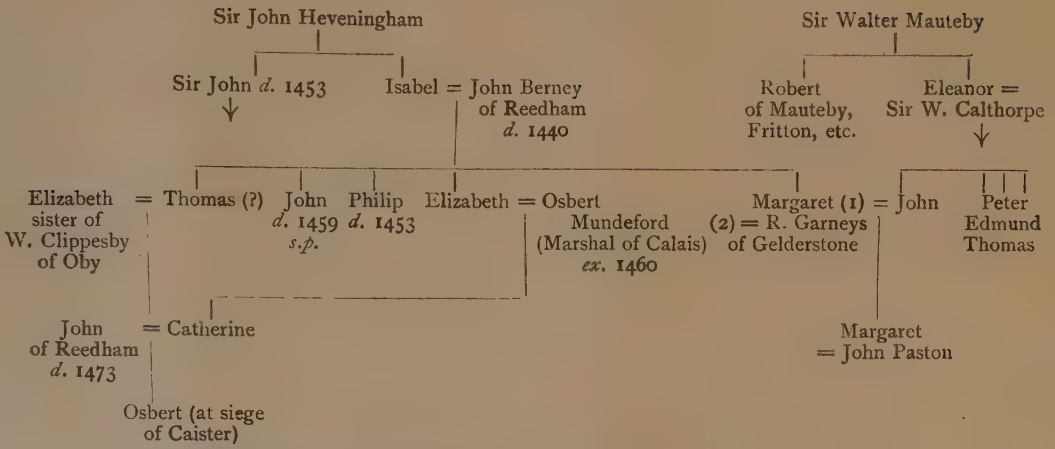
1432–50. Archbp. Stafford.
1450–54. Archbp. Kemp.
1454. Earl of Salisbury (Y.).
1455, March. Archbp. Bourchier (Y.).
1456, Oct. Bp. of Winchester (Waynflete), res. before Battle of Northampton, 1460.
1460, July. Geo. Neville, Bp. Exeter (Y.).
1467, June. Stillington, Bp. Bath and Wells.
1470, Oct. Archbp. Neville (for Warwick).
1471, May. Stillington (for Edw. IV), res. 1473.
1473, July. Booth, Bp. Durham *or deputies*.
1474, May. Rotherham, Bp. Lincoln (*jointly with* Alcock in 1475).
1483. Russell, Bp. Lincoln.
1485. Alcock, Bp. Worcester.
1486–1500. Archbp. Morton.

APPENDIX II—TABLES

(1) PASTON

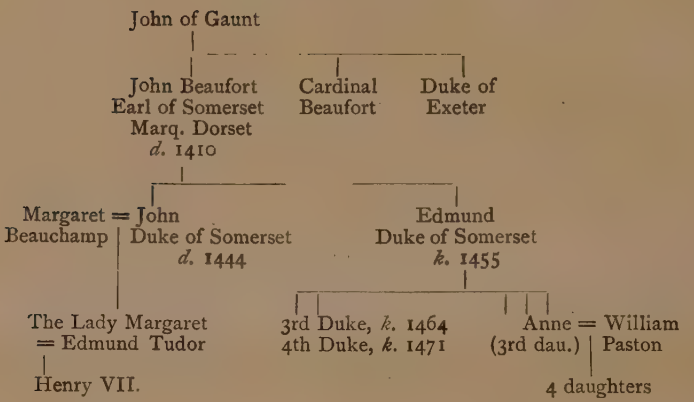

John Berney = Isabel Heveningham
of Reedham
Clement Paston = Beatrice de Somerton
d. 1419
Sir Edmund Berry of Horwellbury, etc.
John Mauteby = Margaret
of Mauteby, Fritton, etc.
Agnes Berry = William Paston
(co-heiress) of Paston, (J. of Common Pleas)
d. 1479 d. 1444
Margaret Mauteby (heiress) d. 1484 = John Paston of Paston, Gresham, etc. d. 1466
Edmund d. 1449?
William = Lady Anne Beaufort
4 daus.
Clement d. before 1487
Elizabeth (1) = R. Poynings (2) Sir G. Browne
Sir Edward Poynings (Deputy in Ireland)
Sir John d. 1479
Sir John d. 1503 (1) = Margery Brews d. 1495 (?) (2) = Agnes Morley widow of J. Isley
Edmund = Catherine widow of Wm. Clippesby of Oby
Robert
Walter d. 1479
William served 13th Earl of Oxford, d. after 1495
Anne = W. Yelverton
Margery = Ric. Calle
Christopher d. young
Sir William = Bridget Heydon, dau. of Harry Heydon and Anne Boleyn, and grand-dau. of John Heydon of Baconsthorpe
d. 1554
Mary = Erasmus Wyndham
Clement Admiral d. 1597
Sir William = Frances Clere of Stokesby
founder of N. Walsham Grammar School

(2) MAUTEBY AND BERNEY

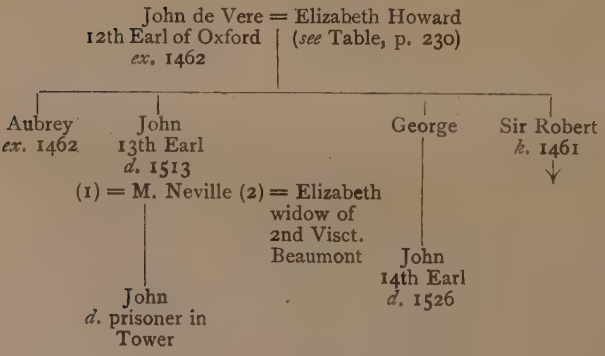

Sir John Heveningham
Sir John d. 1453
Isabel = John Berney of Reedham d. 1440
Sir Walter Mauteby
Robert of Mauteby, Fritton, etc.
Eleanor = Sir W. Calthorpe
Elizabeth sister of W. Clippesby of Oby
= Thomas (?)
John d. 1459 s.p.
Philip d. 1453
Elizabeth = Osbert Mundeford (Marshal of Calais) ex. 1460
Margaret (1) = John
(2) = R. Garneys of Gelderstone
Peter
Edmund
Thomas
John of Reedham d. 1473
= Catherine
Osbert (at siege of Caister)
Margaret = John Paston

A cousin, John Berney of Wichingham (son of Philip, ?), also served at Caister, 1469.

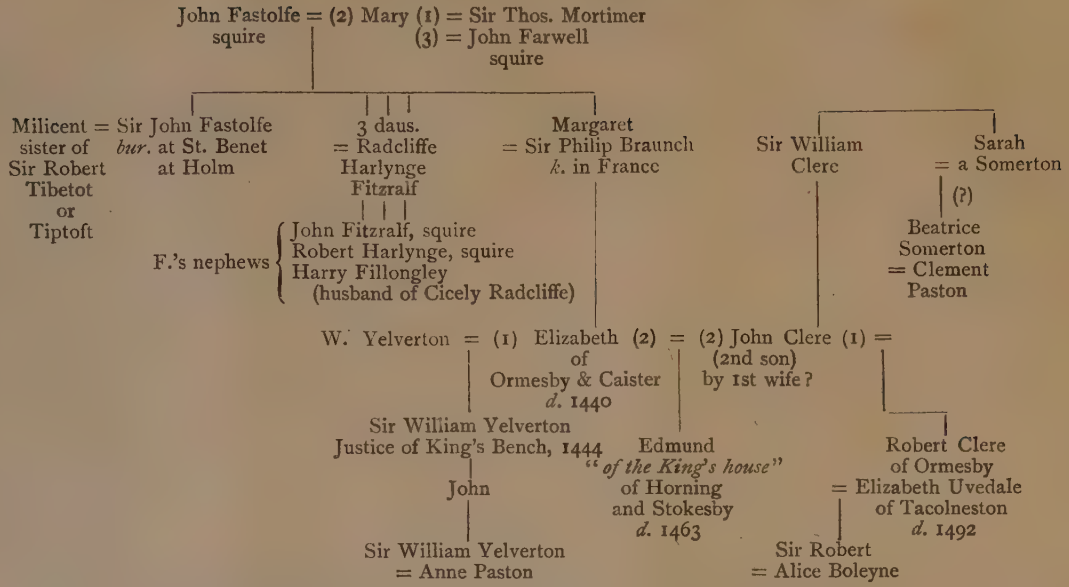
(3) BEAUFORT

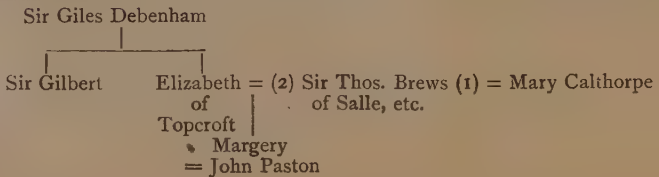


(4) EARLS OF OXFORD



(5) FASTOLFE AND CLERE





GLOSSARY

Ado, to have ado, have business or trouble.
and, frequently = if.
apaid, well apaid, contented.
appeal, to, to accuse of treason.
avaunt, boast.
avarous, avaricious, eager.
bear on hand, *bear an hand* } to accuse, cast it up to one.
behested, promised.
bever, drink.
book of chardequeyns, pound of preserved quince.
brenned, burned.
brigandine, coat of jointed mail.
brook, to, bear; retain food.
chavyll, chavel [chawl, jowl] of a whale, jaw.
cheap, to, to bargain.
chevisaunce, usury.
chevise, to, to raise money on loan.
cheve day, day of patron saint of church [tithe day?].
clean Lent, the first whole week of Lent, beginning on the first Sunday.
clepe, to, to call.
comb = 4 bushels, or half a quarter (of corn).
con, can, be able to.
corver, a Dutch fishing-boat, especially for herring catching.
creanser, creditor.
cup-shotten, having drunk too much, given to drinking.
cunning, expert.
dainty, rare, scarce.
danger, to be in his, to owe him a debt.
defend, forbid.
devoir, dever, duty, best endeavour.
dime, tenth, tithe.
do, often for done; also as auxiliary verb with sense of causing to be done.
do make, to, to have [a thing] made.
do buy, to, to get some one to buy for one.
dogger, two-masted fishing-boat, blunt in the bows: used for trawling or cod fishing.
drage, draget, a mixture of barley with oats for making a poor quality of malt.

drenchyn, drowned.
duties, often = dues.
eaten my part on Good Friday, I had no part.
eme, em, emme, uncle.
escutys, scutes, crowns ($3\frac{1}{2}$ to a £; Italian coin.).
even [*Christian*], equal, fellow.
Fastingong, Shrove-tide.
fellowship, company of armed men.
feodmen, men who held a fee, feu, or fief, for military service.
flight, a, a kind of arrow.
forbear, lose, go without.
garees, finery.
to gather (*silver, livelihood*), collect rents or dues.
gorget, a collar. *Cf.* No. 188 for the device of a gorget worn as a sign of livery.
gosune [*gossoon, garçon*], boy [contemptuous].
greyns, grains, grains of Paradise [miscalled grains of Paris], a spice from West African coast, "long pepper."
groat, small silver coin, nominally worth 4d., often debased or broken.
hackney, trotting horse for ordinary riding.
have me in await, to, to plan harm towards me, lie in wait for.
to have ruth (*rowthe*), to care, be sorry for.
hested, promised.
hight, named.
hone (*to be set on an*), to be sharply taken to task (like a razor being sharpened).
imp, to improve a falcon's feathers artificially.
insured, betrothed, pledged.
jape, to, to mock or deceive.
journey [*journée*], day of fighting.
lant (*God lant you*), God bless you, God guide you; doubtless meant for a Flemish greeting.
lansman, lanceman, knight (meant for lanzmann, Flemish-Burgundian mounted warrior).
leech, physician.
let, to, to hinder.
lever, liefer, rather.
lewd, ignorant, foolish.
livelode [*livelihood*], income, or land bringing an income.
loader, carrier.
longeth, belongeth to.
mark, not a coin but a sum of 13*s.* 4*d.*
menial, belonging to company.
meny, menge, company of retainers.
mine unweeting, myself not knowing.
money; see *mark, noble, groat.*
mote, must.
mowe, mowecon, be able to
muer de haye, (of a bad hawk); falcons moulting were shut up [mewed] in cages, or even in twig cages stuck in hedges. (Fit only for hiding in a hedge?)
murrey, dark red [mulberry colour].
muster-develers, a warm, mixed grey woollen cloth, probably named from Moustierville (mouster-vilers).

myrr', a sickness (bad cold?).
myvers, minever.
noble, a coin = silver, 6*s.* 8*d.* or half a mark (1465 called *angels*); a gold noble (in 1465 a rose noble or *royal*) = 8*s.* 4*d.*; 8 gold nobles = 5 marks = 66*s.* 8*d.*
Nowch; see *ouch*.
oyer and determiner, an, a commission of O. and D. [hearing and settling] for judges on assize to deal with charges of riot and violence.
ouch, ornament to wear, much like a brooch.
owl, to, (to hoodwink, or deceive?).
pilled, plundered.
plunket, a blue colour.
pound, not a coin, a sum of 20 shillings, or a mark and a half.
prief, profit.
purvey, provide.
quarrels, square-headed iron bolts for crossbows.
quiet, quit, requited, paid out.
raise, to set a fresh nap on cloth.
rape, haste.
rathe, early.
ray, undyed cloth.
revel, riot.
room, place.
rutter [*ruiter*], spear-man, cavalry man.
sad, serious, responsible.
safeguards.
salet, a light head-piece or steel-cap.
scutes; see *escutes*.
shent, blamed.
shuttle-witted, volatile, feather-pated.
side gown, a long robe.
sowde [*solde*], pay.
sowdier, sowndier, (paid) soldiers.
spere, sperre, to, to enquire.
task, tax.
unethe, scarcely.
vaunt, avaunt, boast.
wared, expended.
ween, think.
wit, wot, know, knows.
wite, blame.
woothe, probably for worth, *take it in w.*, assume, think the best of
wyndacs, windlacs, instruments for winding up crossbows
yede, yode, went.

THE END

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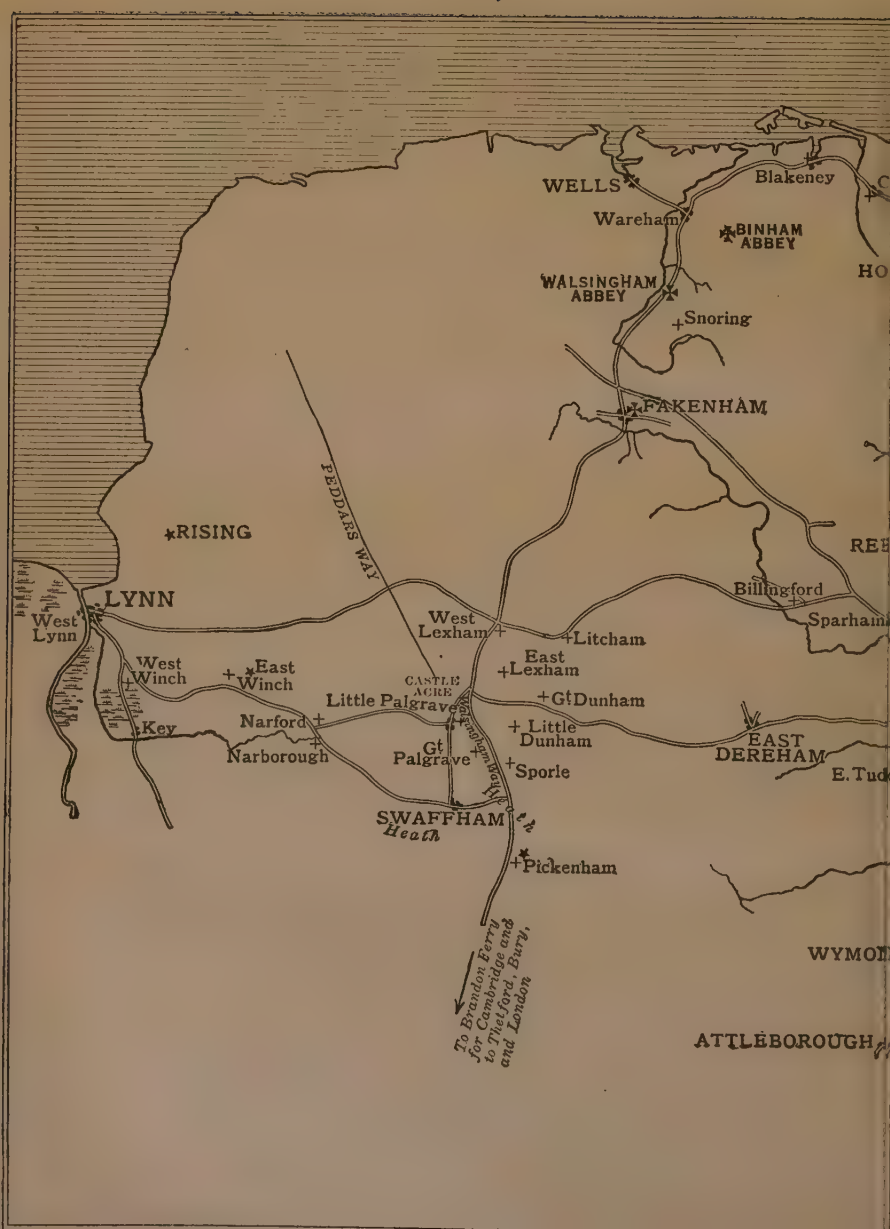
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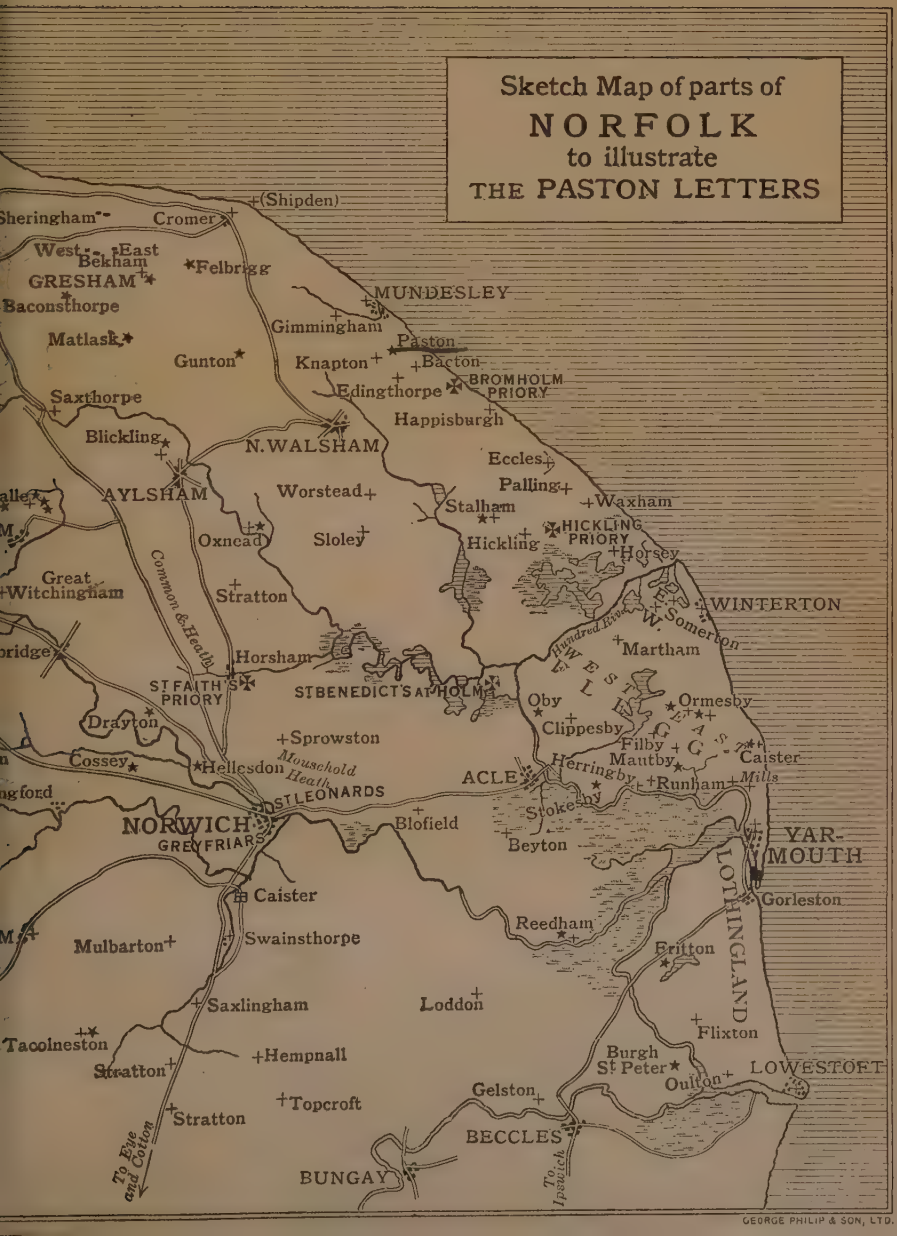

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